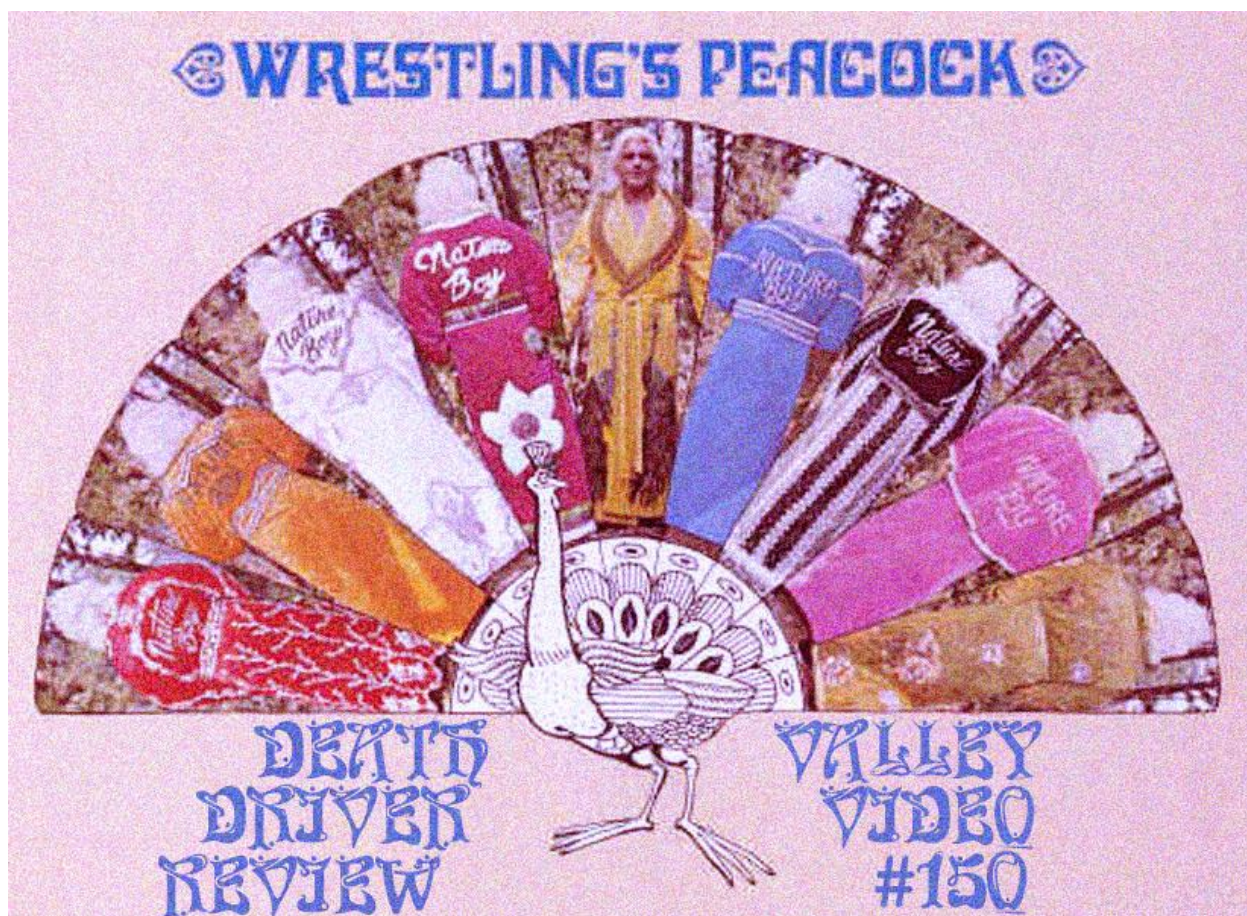




WELCOME TO THE DEATH VALLEY DRIVER VIDEO REVIEW #150

I was a youth. Life hadn't broken me down and built me back up again. Love was strange and new. Music was great and you could dance to it. I'm talking about the MOTHERFUCKING 80S!!! You gotta rock and don't stop it, you gotta rock and don't stop. We're going completely 80s so you get to relive an era of greatness in the wrestling. Mysterious and serious I ain't no joke- fire from the depths of hell And you can smell the SMOKE. WORD, motherfucker.
(Your cover is the work of young Raven Mack.)

IN LOVING MEMORY OF SHINYA HASHIMOTO.

Hashif Khan/ Yang Chung vs Bruce Hart/ Brian Pillman- Stampede Wrestling-11/87-[DEAN RASMUSSEN]: In 87 I was far thinner and I was quite regularly satiating/disappointing my redheaded girlfriend who was from California and who was on the swim team. Her back muscles were amazing. She was Catholic and I was Southern Baptist so you really can't imagine how amazingly great the sex was. Meanwhile, I'm assuming that Shinya Hashimoto was loving on thick-ankled cornfed Calgary women while wrestling as Hashif Khan in Stampede. My little brother loaned me this dvd and I love the fact that my little brother now has a far cooler collection of wrestling than I have. We talk about wrestling at length at family functions until our older brother shows up and then we talk football. The last time we were all together, we tried to

name all the quarterbacks that started for the Seattle Seahawks since Dave Krieg. It was great. My brothers rule. Anyway, Shinya was putting the blast on Calgary mogambo and wrestling across the prairie as a distant cousin of Karachi Vice, I assume. Hell, they're Canadians in the 80s, who would know the difference I guess. Hash is like 220 here. I think Yang Chung was a New Japan rookie who threw his back out and gave up the biz. Here, he and Hash clubber Pillman and Pillman gets gigantic air on a standing dropkick and you and I remember the other guy in this match who died way before he was supposed to. Don't do drugs, kids. Hash kinda wrestles like Kendo Nagasaki wrestles in tag matches with Mr Pogo in Puerto Rico around this same time period- very 70s Mid-Atlantic with the Vertical Suplex and not hellish kicks and basic attempts at basic formal competence- which was the upside of wrestling in Canada in 1987, you left knowing how to wrestle the rest of your life anywhere you went. Pillman jumps waay high on a crossbody off the top after the comical Bruce Hart hits a lariat and Hash is down for the count. I imagine that Hash mounted a Calgary lady in the back of Champagne Gerry Morrow's Vega later that evening with "Lay It On The Line" by Triumph lightly playing in the background. Someone needs to do a movie on Hash's life in the 80s in the US and Canada. It would HAVE to be half as good as I imagine it in my mind.

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GEORGIA, 1983-4: WINTER SQUASH [AG]

IVAN KOLOFF V RANDY MULLIN: Russia sent Uncle Ivan to cattle mutilation Comrade Mullin. Brad Armstrong summed up the match: "Koloff's been steady droppin' knees on him." Koloff had some of the grooviest squash matches ever. Shame about the Soviet economic model, but it is reputed that Russkie premier/sexpot Vlad Putin learned judo from Ivan Koloff, after he brought the Georgia TV Title back to mother Russia so long ago. Interesting trivia: The Soviet Politburo believed in five year plans, and offered Ivan that long to secure gold in the Peach State. But Ivan said he could do that in half the time. His words were seen as bravado, but he got the last laugh when feted on the Red Square in Moscow.

RIC FLAIR V JERRY GREY: Like the more heralded Mike Graham, Jerry Grey is a smallish Florida guy with technical skills, and he flashes them early in this competitive squash with Flair. Grey gets rough, and the larger Flair is allowed to take us to school, chopping and using the hanging vertical suplex and all the rest. This runs about 6 minutes, but is better than a lot of longer Flair matches -- like the things with Graham -- from the same period. The work here is solid, though not of the first rate; that said, it's Ric Flair at the peak of his talents, and if you're able to see this, you should.

GREAT KABUKI V JOEL DEATON: This may be the best Kabuki match I've ever seen. He's like a ring-a-ding-dong-dillyoo-dandy of a Nipponese dervish-doll, flying around the squared circle, devil may care, with derring do. Meanwhile, Deaton sells everything like it's buckshot from a twelve gauge, looking like the genkiest JBL ever. This is from Charlotte, ergo, it's a repackaged

Mid-Atlantic match. Much better than you'd expect if your idea of Kabuki is that of just a gimmick rassler.

BRETT WAYNE V JAKE ROBERTS: Roberts is seconded by Legion of Doom member Buzz Sawyer [in a PWI shirt, as if courting coverage from the mag] and Manager Paul Ellering. Roberts spends the whole match abusing Wayne, not in the way he did Kevin Northcutt I mean, but just kicking and using some low-grade control wrestling. This goes on for some time until Sawyer is outraged at Ellering taking liberties with Wayne, and evens the odds, fucking up his alliances but getting right with his blood. Often called a must-see angle that was all over the Apter mags, this has nonetheless never done much for me. Roberts is about the fifth-best heel in the company for this sort of extended beatdown of a young pup -- that's part of it, but the issue is more than I just couldn't care less about Brett Wayne. Along those lines, this match was where Buzz Sawyer lost a 9 year old's love. I could respect wanting to take blood out of Wildfire -- who wouldn't? But I drew the line at Buzz turning on good folks like the LOD to help out boring old Brett Wayne. Recommendation to treat with veiled contempt.

LES THORNTON V PAT ROSE: Two wildly underrated chain wrestlers here. Thornton though is in a class by himself, using floatovers and rides like no one in the modern era, working a deft and crisp power suplex game, and grinding Rose into the mat. Thornton was arguably the best of the Crockett undercard people during his run in Mid-Atlantic, and when he dropped the NWA Jr. Belt to Denny Brown, there was a domino effect affecting first the workrate then the draws on Mid-Atlantic cards. This match, again, is worth going out of your way to see if you want to see the most underrated wrestler of the 80s in with someone worthy of facing him.

HARLEY RACE V REGGIE PARKS: Very showbizzy, quick match, the kind of thing you'd see at the end of a PPV edition of Heat. A lot of flash pin attempts, but less chain wrestling flashed. The story here is that the flamboyant Parks wants to take the belt off Harley Race's waist. And this time, not just to refit the strap to Race's waist either. Not the quintessential Harley Race match, but probably Reggie Parks looking as good as possible. Solie puts over Race's biography in the PBP, which is cool unless you've committed that to memory. Race travelled 250k miles a year to defend his belt, said Solie. Yet he never found time to defend against Ivan Koloff. Not a fighting champ....

RICK STEAMBOAT AND JAY YOUNGBLOOD V MASA FUCHI AND HARRIS [A.K.A. BLACK BART]: This is the Masa Fuchi showcase match, bringing back so many memories of Fuchi working the Mid-Atlantic shows in those swank Capri trunks, making me wonder how it was I couldn't remember him working there until now. I mean, I prattle on about Johnny Weaver like he's my real dad -- incidentally, Weaver and David Crockett are calling this match, and it is the intersection of Lobotomy Boulevard and Dull-Normal Pike.... Anyway, Fuchi makes this match -- great selling, actually has to slow down for Steamboat to keep up. But "Harris" is no slouch here either, booked as a stand-in for Sgt. Slaughter, with whom Steamboat and his partner are feuding. Mid-Atlantic often put together anomalous teams, but Fuchi and Black Bart stands out even in that trend. Who would've thought the match would not simply be worth a damn, but compelling to the point where it seemed like Fuchi was going to take out the face world tag team

champs by his self, at a time when he was built like TAKA circa 1995. [A million stars. Have you refinanced your home today, incidentally? JOHN CENA refi boom~!]

MIKE JACKSON V JAKE ROBERTS: Competitive squash. Solie compares Jackson's offense to a mongoose. Jackson hits a second-rope missile dropkick. Pound for pound, Mike Jackson was the most over enhancement guy in the business, because everything he did in the ring he did with obvious intent. He was as small as Mysterio, but unlike Rey Rey was believable against someone twice his size, because he did not play around, do shtick, or piss away his credibility. Far better wrestling here than in the Wayne/Roberts match that earned Wayne a main-event push.

RIP ROGERS V MAGNUM TA: Rogers working brunette in this two minute special. Nothing match otherwise.

SUPER DESTROYER V MAGNUM TA: Canned crowd noise here doesn't cover up Super Destroyer outwrestling the babyface, who fucks up an atomic drop and does little but cheesy spots the Cole Twins would've rejected as jejune. Super D puts on a wrestling clinic -- an enziquiri, a highlight of a solid bouillabaise of chain wrestling and sound psychology reminiscent of Masked Superstar. If Super D had been wrestling Superstar, it would've been a better match. Am I alone in thinking that Magnum TA was pretty much overrated? If it weren't for faces like Magnum, I'd never have been a Horseman fan. Well, at least until they did Ricky Morton's nosejob. Rhinoplasty on the armory floor....

SUPER DESTROYER V JIM DUGGAN: HOSS V HOSS.... ASK NOR GIVE QUARTER... THE MEASURE OF THE MAN... DUGGAN IS JUST TOO MUCH FOR HIM...DOUBLE-TOUGH...HOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

KING KONG BUNDY V TWO JOBBERS: Five! Five! FIVEFIVE! Five! \$15k on the line. FIVE!

LES THORNTON V MIKE JACKSON: Only a minute shown, as whoever taped this originally lost interest in the match. But they were working a quick freestyle, a lot of vertical base stuff, and at the precise moment the tape stopped Action Jackson was blocking a side suplex. I would've liked to have seen this whole match -- appeared to be a clinic in the making, with Thornton going over as he fought for his world title at the house shows that used to be so popular once upon a time.

FABULOUS MOOLAH V JOYCE GRABLE: From Columbus, GA. Hometown hero Grable gets a shot at Moolah's WWWF World women's title. Moolah is treated like a joke by many on the internet, and these folks would benefit from seeing this match. Tight, realistic, non-business exposing, this match was an antidote to all of the depressing silicone bullshit that defines US women's wrestling. Got better as it went along, with no overtly camp erotic plays to the crowd, but with kickass giant swings and reversals and hard ground wrestling. One of the best women's

matches I have ever seen. Moolah wrestles like Gene Anderson, and you can see why she'd hold a belt for decades on end.

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PRO WRESTLING THIS WEEK - 5/26/1988

[RYAN (MuI)DOOMSTONE]

I recall reading in some old Apter magazine when I was but a wee tyke about some (presumably UHF) TV station somewhere in this great nation that did something silly like run 8 or 10 or 12 hours of wrestling every weekend, all capped off with the clip show, "Pro Wrestling This Week." Whatever the prepubescent equivalent of a wet dream is, that was mine. Wow - that sounds even gayer than I could have imagined. So I pulled this tape out of the closet (where it apparently sat next to my sexuality), to see what all the fuss was about.

We begin with Joe Pedicino and his co-host (whose name is not up on the graphics and I wonder what ridiculous role in played in the backroom of some struggling promotion, throwing his co-host weight around) noting the number of TV stations they are appearing on every week, including a French TV station. The co-host would like to say "bonjour" to their French viewers - Pedicino says he would like to say "Bon Jovi" to them. No kidding, he really said that. I would not be shocked to learn that Joe Pedicino did a few stints at open-mic night at some heartland comedy club, bumming out that he was never asked to MC, his comedy career culminating the time the assistant manager of "Laugh-a-Bouts" in Mobile, Alabama scored him a free platter of cheese sticks.

Our first clip is from Continental, and HOLY SHIT! If it isn't the Dr. Tom Pritchard-Dirty White Boy-Dirty White Girl hair-cutting, domestic violence teasing angle of all angles. DEAN put this on one of his old "keg comps" back in 2001, which I will always remember because I ordered a copy from him, which felt incredibly weird because I realized at the time we lived about five or six blocks from each other. But I mailed my money to him anyway. To his credit, he called me about a week later, and we met up at Richmond's finest record store, Plan 9, for the tape exchange and to watch a semi-nascent LAMB OF GOD do a pretty awesome in-store appearance. Ahhhh, glory days. In a glimmer of a young girl's eye, glory days. Time is a jet plane, it moves too fast. Anyway, this is so fantastic and it occurs to me that a young(er) Tom Pritchard looked a lot like Kerry Von Erich but with a personality. And who's the meteorologist who co-hosted Continental with our hero, Gordon Solie? I could watch this shit for hours.

We got to a break with an on-screen listing for the Southern Championship Wrestling from Georgia main-eventing a "\$10,000 Slam Battle Royal" at the Marietta Civic Center. A "slam" battle royal? Someone get me a tape, please!

Second clip, second beer, and I worry I am stealing Raven's gimmick in a piss-poor imitation. I remember I also had a Grande White Chocolate Mocha from Starbucks this morning, and realize I'm not even close, and move on. Our next clip is from POWW - Powerful Women of Wrestling. Ok ... it's Luna Vachon vs. Shannon O'Brien, and I saw Shannon O'Brien in a porn flick bootlegged off of the old "American XXXtacy" satellite channel in the tenth grade. The

crowd is so silent I consider this may have been filmed in Japan. Luna gets the pin after coming of “the third rope” as our female color commentator helpfully explains. I’m at a loss.

Next up is a clip from the WWF, Ax and Smash of Demolition against a couple of jobbers whose names slip by me as I’m busy picking my nose. My lawn consists of a couple (more than a couple) patches of dirt where the trees refuse to let the grass grow. I go out in the middle of the day and sing “I Can Hear the Grass Grow” by THE MOVE to no avail. So every time after I mow my lawn, I have these dirty-dirt Dirt McGirt boogers in my nose that I am compelled to remove via Von Muldoon Claw. So, that’s a downside to being a jobber in the late 80’s WWF. I begin to enjoy the verbal jousting of Vince McMahon and Jesse Ventura, when Vinny Mac busts out with, “Next week, Hillbilly Jim goes up against the Honky Tonk Man and what a match-up that’s going to be!” This is a bitter pill to swallow. I move on.

Next up is Windy City Wrestling, where Paul E. Dangerously is dangerously taking a punch from Steve Regal (the other one, I suppose). Out of nowhere, Col. DeBeers clocks Regal with Paul E.’s ginormous early cell phone, and Regal sells it like like he got hit with ... well, like he got hit with a ginormous early cell phone. I had forgot about Dangerously’s early propensity for Cosby sweaters. Say what you will about the man (and if your last name is Dudley, you should be saying “Where the fuck is my money”), but he was ace on the mic from the beginning, as evidenced here when he shouts at Regal, “You no good son of a ...” before expertly moving the mic away from his mouth so as not to ruin to post-production budget by having to bleep the word “bitch.” The whole scene is broken up by the Windy City Dream Team and Sonny Rogers ... I think. Weird.

We go to World Class Championship Wrestling, where a heel Terry Taylor and “Gentleman” Chris Adams are locked into some silly grudge match that manifests itself in Adams wearing a catchers mask to avoid further facial destruction at the hand of Taylor. The clip is clipped, and we hit a few wrinkles in time that make it difficult to tell just what is going on. I will say that Terry Taylor has some nice punches ... not the best I’ve ever seen, but far above mediocre. I never noticed that before. I like a heel Terry Taylor. Chris Adams is moaning and squealing like a man being beaten and Taylor is right there, shouting, “You had ENOUGH?!? HUH?!?!? HUH?!?!?” and the ringside mic is picking it all up. Announcer Mark Mercer says, “Taylor is making a bad situation worse by using his mouth,” and I flash to my first experience with cunnilingus. Sorry. Stupid Bronco Lubich calls for the bell when Adams uses his catchers mask as a weapon.

Our hosts throw it over to Boni Blackstone ... FINALLY! Oh, Boni. Your hair, your gold lame dress, your unrequited love. Where did it all go wrong? Boni presents the silly viewers with the official P.O. Box where you can write to Randy Savage or ANY of your favorite WWF stars. Did anyone ever do this, and did they ever get anything in return? When I was about five or six years old, I used to write to every NFL player I had a football card for. I don’t recall where I got the addresses. But I clearly remember about a million letters to football players, asking for their autograph, even addressing the envelopes myself. I remember around the fourth grade English class, we started learning how to properly address a letter, and I was like, “Are you shitting me? Who doesn’t know this?!?” Clearly, I’ve always been an advanced student. That’s why I’m

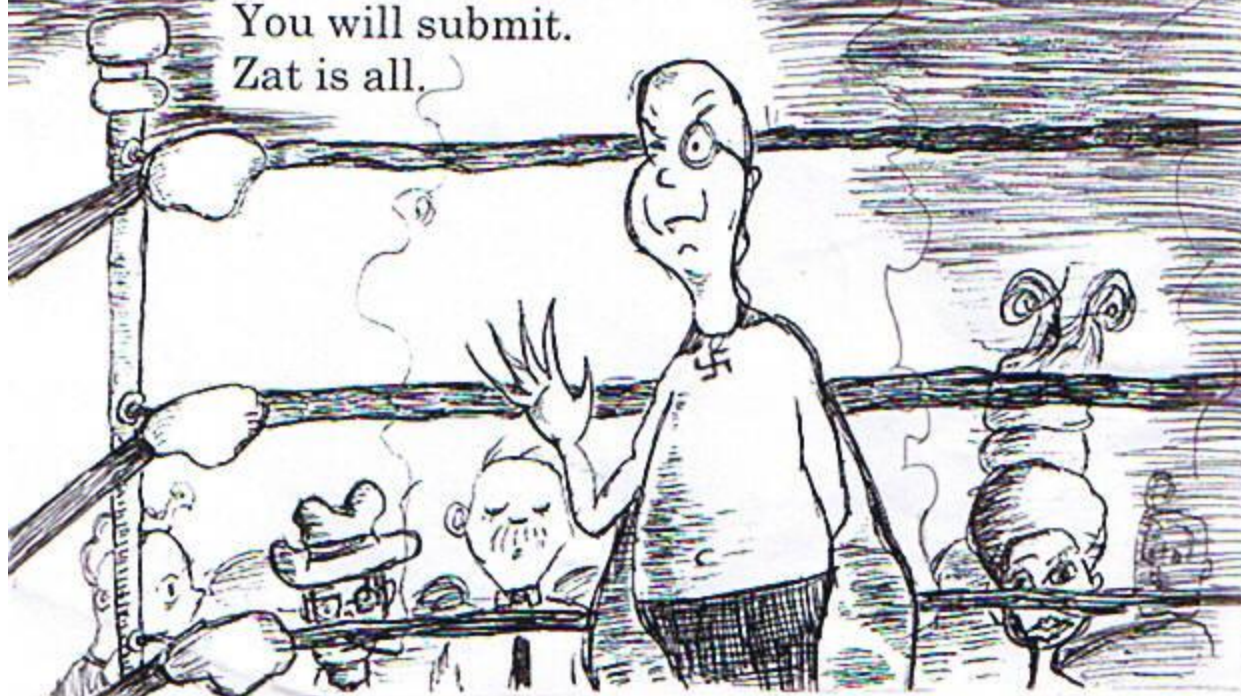
drinking Miller, eating cheese puffs and writing about wrestling. Anyway, I don't know if my parents threw most of these letters away or what, but I only ever got responses from three of four players. Jack Hamm of the Steelers sent me a photocopied picture with an autograph. Donnie Shell (also of the Steelers - I was a big Steelers fan) also send me an autograph, on a pre-printed three-fold tract called, "Donnie Shell: My Life as a Christian." It was on yellow paper, with black ink (Steelers colors!). I remember not understanding what the fuck he was talking about, even though I went to church three times a week. Some poor sap from the Falcons sent me something. Best of all was Roger Staubach - at the time, a top two or three most popular player in the game - sent me an autographed, glossy 8 x 10. How weird is that? We also see a taped remote on Boni talking with Carlos Colon about the Puerto Rican fans. Colon believes that the Puerto Rican fans are the greatest in the world. An Boni never won a Peabody? What the fuck? I start thinking about Boni, enjoying her time in beautiful Puerto Rico ... maybe hitting the beach in a stunning two-piece ... maybe going out dancing ... maybe some coke ... anyway, my fantasies are shattered by staring at Colon's forehead. GEEEEEYAH! Do you think a forehead like that just hurts all the time?

Synchronically, our next clip is from Caribbean Championship wrestling, with Colon going up against Wild Samoan Afa, and the winner gets \$10,000 and a "beautiful championship cup." I wonder if it's THAT kind of cup. This is ... not the best match I've ever seen, but the crowd response says otherwise, so I have to question all assumptions on my life. Hell, maybe Black Sabbath DO suck. Apparently, I know nothing about anything. Carlos gets the three, Afa gets a spittoon full of coke, and the team at Pro Wrestling This Week names Colon as the "7-Up Wrestler of the Week."

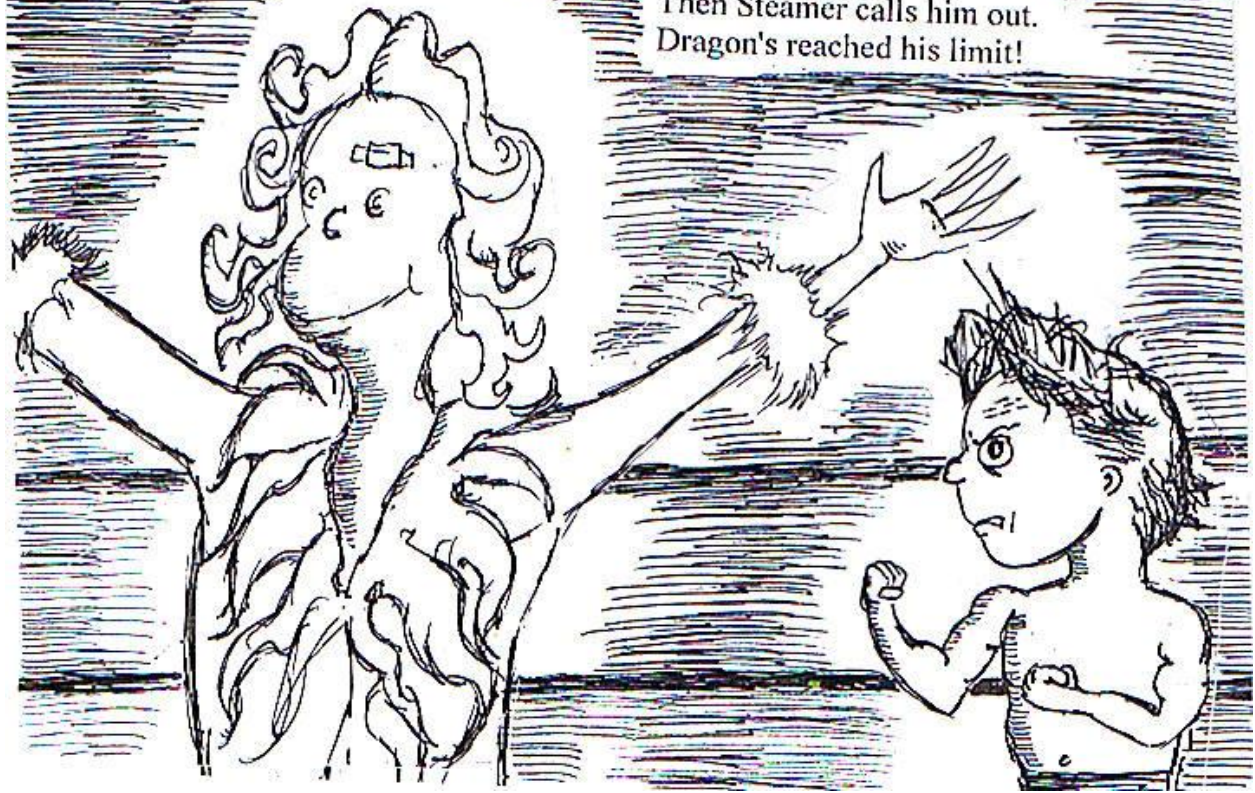
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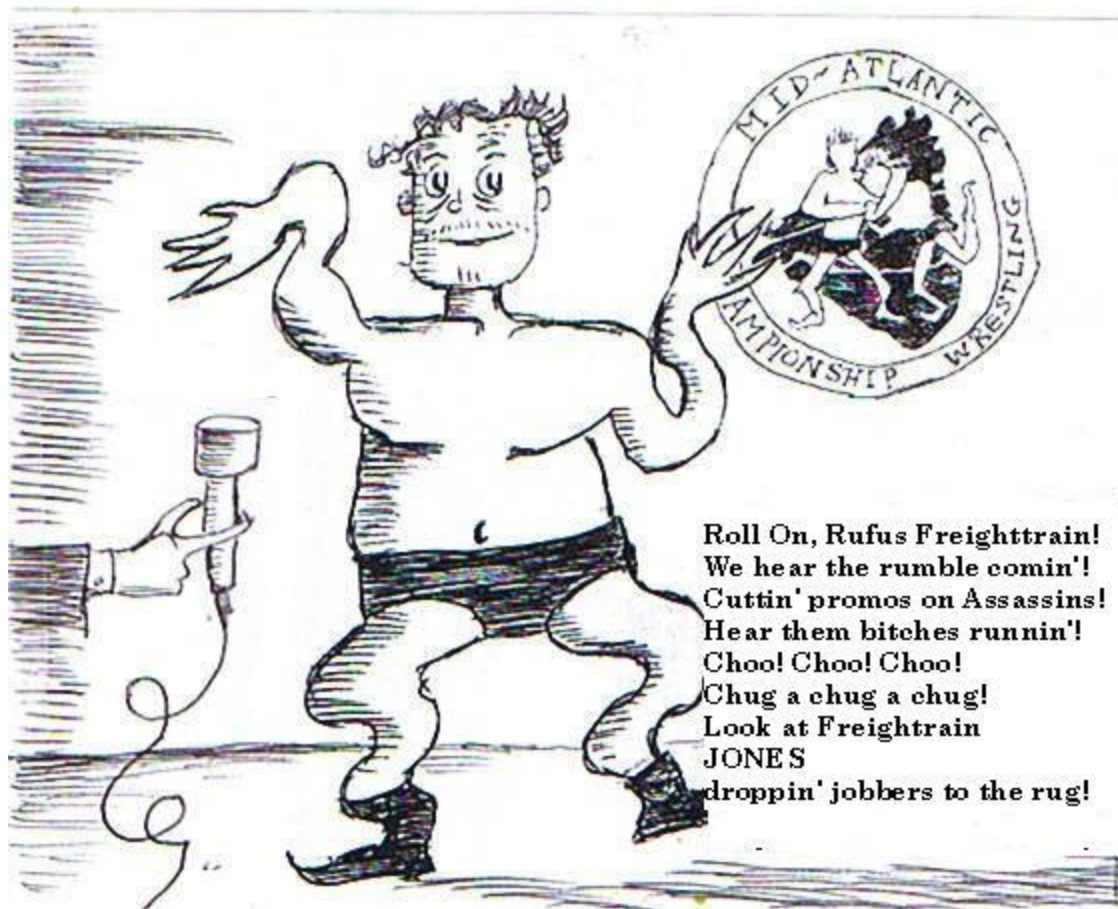


See the Baron.
See his claw.
You will submit.
Zat is all.



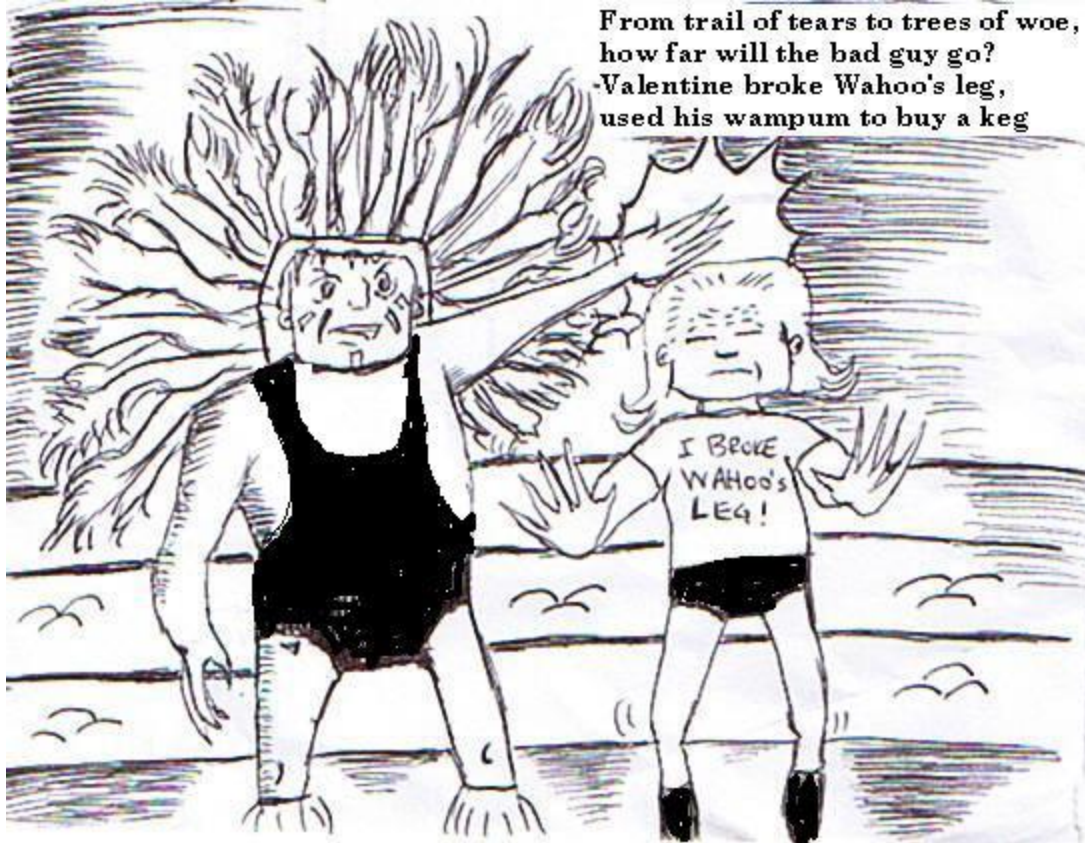
Flair goes wooo!
For one hot minute.
Then Steamer calls him out.
Dragon's reached his limit!



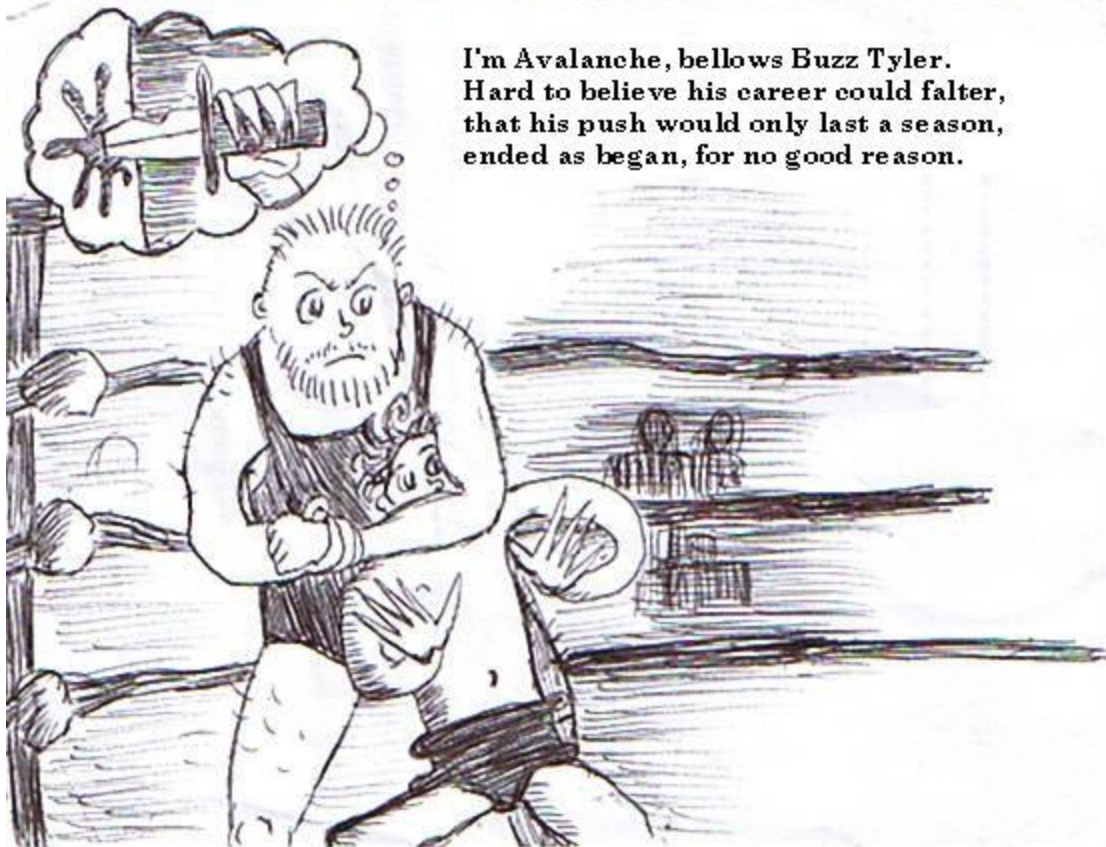


Roll On, Rufus Freighttrain!
We hear the rumble comin'!
Cuttin' promos on Assassins!
Hear them bitches runnin'!
Choo! Choo! Choo!
Chug a chug a chug!
Look at Freightrain
JONES
droppin' jobbers to the rug!

From trail of tears to trees of woe,
how far will the bad guy go?
Valentine broke Wahoo's leg,
used his wampum to buy a keg



I'm Avalanche, bellows Buzz Tyler.
Hard to believe his career could falter,
that his push would only last a season,
ended as began, for no good reason.



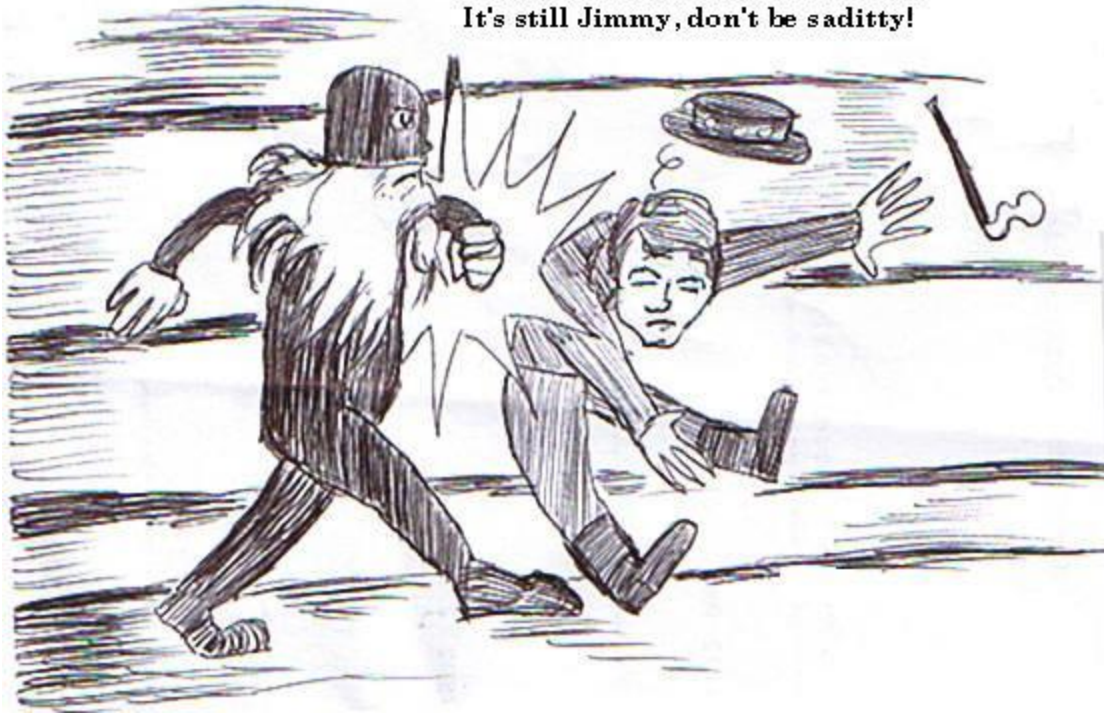
When kings wear masks,
it's best not to ask.
When Handsome Jimmy was gone,
who should appear like gin in a flask....

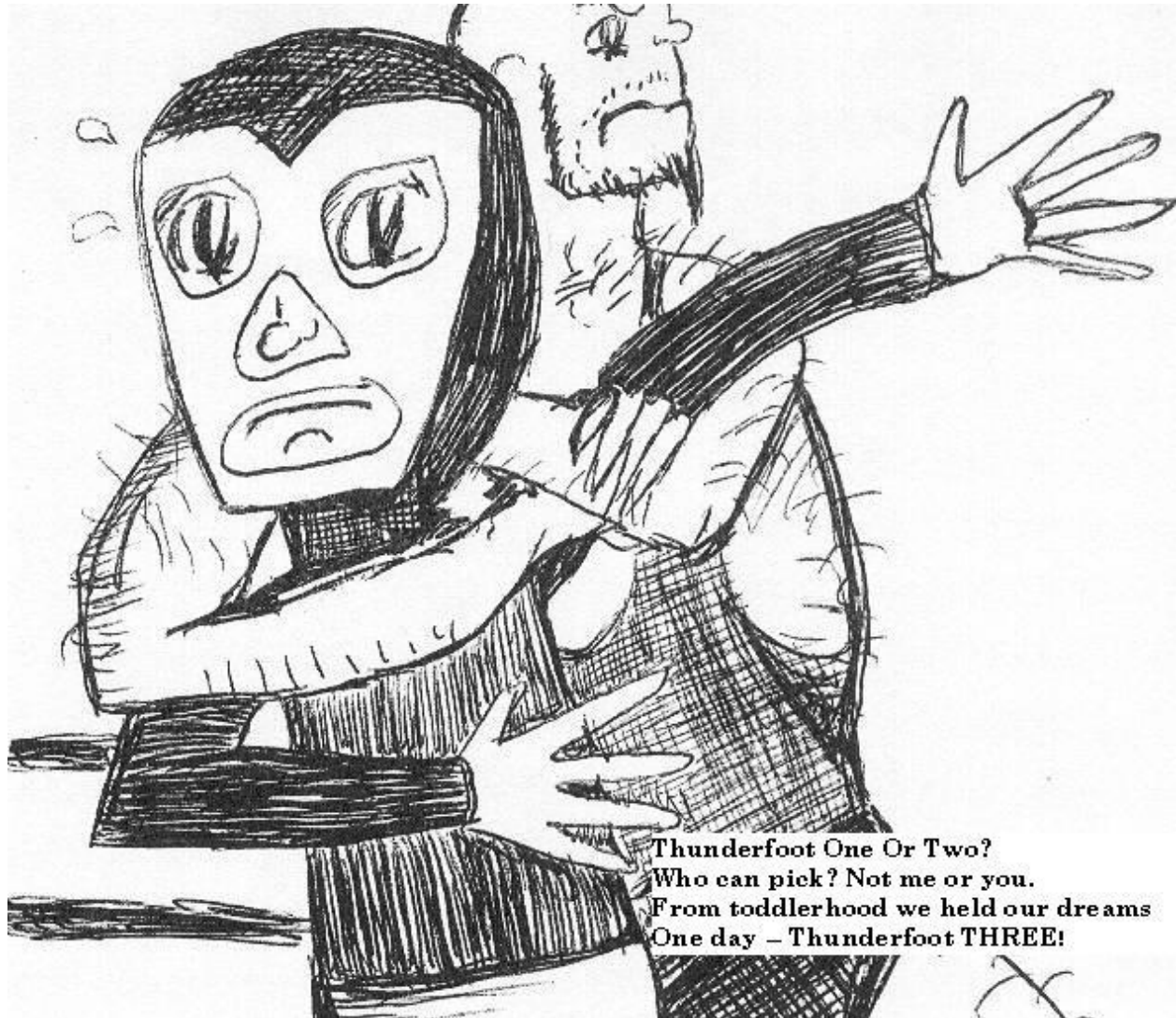


But Charlie Brown from Outta Town,
Proud shrouded warrior, built to last.

All of the fans, they rooted him on!
All of Them yearned to hear his song!

'Ooh wa ooh wah cool-cool kitty.
It's still Jimmy, don't be saditty!





Thunderfoot One Or Two?
Who can pick? Not me or you.
From toddlerhood we held our dreams
One day – Thunderfoot THREE!

RED MEANS GREEN

words by Dr Ganc

pictures by Dr Rasm

~!~

80s BRITISH WRESTLING- the Wrestling Network- Danny Collins special
[DEAN RASMUSSEN]

I waited forever to watch this because- c'mon it's Danny Collins. But then I saw that it has two Fit Finaly matches and Jim motherfucking Breaks so I'm all over it. They get this stuff everyday on the cable TV in England. I hate them all, lucky motherfuckers.

Danny Collins vs Dave 'Fit' Finlay- 2/1/1986: Fit is with Princess Paula, is sporting the Guitar-Player For Sweet Soccer Rocker and is fucking awesome in this. He whips out the Cravate early and EVERYBODY who goes to wrestling school should be forced to watch Fit utilize a cravate before they graduate. So fucking awesome, simple and nasty- wrenching Collins head into impossible positions. Collins grabs the leg to break it and Fit wrenches it down and Collins releases the leg. Fit switched to a headlock so Collins can go on offense so you can realize that Collins was quite the Firebreaker Chip in the pantheon of British 80s wrestling. The second round starts and Princess Paula draws heat by kissing Fit- and I can't really figure out why. They didn't use their tongues or anything. Princess Paula is comely lass. Go figure out the British in the 80s. Fit does this bearhug where he throws Collins into the ropes and double thrusts to the stomach as he bounces off- but Fit is so close-up that it looks all like a Strongstyle use of the ropes. Fit whips out a SWEET Quarternelson with a hand pulling the jaw away from the shoulder and you gotta love the weird physics and beauty of British Pro Style Matwork. Round 3 they kiss again but noone is appalled this time. Collins will accept his assbeating like a man. Maybe he was more like the Lee Scott of 80s British Wrestling. Collins has a hope spot with a nice dropkick but Fit Big Boots him down and fucking slaughters him with a tombstone piledriver. They show a replay and it is so nasty, Fit Finlay had the best Tombstone ever.

"Grasshopper" Phil Johnson vs Dave 'Fit' Finlay- 3/22/1986: The crowd is pissed when hilariously sequinned ring announcer man introduces Paula as "beautiful". Fuck that crowd- she was beautiful. If they can't groove to the earthy beauty of a Native American then they deserve to be thrashed soundly in the field at Yorktown. Fit wears a 3 Muskateers hat and you KNOW he wore it after the match walked down to the pub and not a motherfucker said a word to him there and back. Johnson look 70 but I think he was actually in his early 20s here. He does a Kung Fu gimmick and you want to hate him more than you do- it's so goofy and innocent you have to hate him far less than you think you would. They pretty much do a Jim Breaks-styled match- where Fit tries to keep up with Johnson athletically and gets fabulous heel heat when he whines when he comes up short. Finlay is like Jumbo in the Yatsu match- after a while he says, "Fuck it, I'm tired of this bullshit, I'm kicking the fuck out of you." And he does. Finlay is a pain-infliction machine after getting Johnson over as the niftier nimbler wrestler. Fit shows that you can actually beat "nifty" and "nimble" and "athletic" with "fuck you", "suck on this" and "how about I beat the living dogshit out of you, motherfucker." And it's fun to watch. It starts with Fit catching him with a boot as Johnson rushes the corner. FUHST PUBLIC WAN-NING TO FIT FINLAY. That says "quality ass-stomping" to me. Johnson gets more and goofier comebacks than Danny Collins got (I mean come on, he looks like Peter Garrett from Midnight Oil and he does a Kung Fu gimmick. It gets pretty goofy) but Fit put the boots to Johnson more. Fit's uppercut and Fall-away Suplex start it back off and Fit punches him in the stomach a lot to set up the Tombstone- but Johnson claps Finlay's ears with Johnson's legs and he delays the knock-out for a few minutes- as Grasshopper does some comical Kung Fu chops and then run right into a Fit Finlay High Knee to set up the inevitable Tombstone knockout. Fit and Paula postmatch have an argument over a muffler/neck warmer thing that is in the ring. I'm baffled and they cut away.

Danny Collins vs Mal Sanders- 1986: Haven't seen Mal Sanders before and I get the feeling that we are deep into the Danny Boy Collins section that we all feared. Sanders is all old and nimble

so I assume he gets his Johnny Saint-like induction into the Smack's Most Beloved pantheon soon- and who would blame them. This is a lot of flipping and flopping and spinning and cartwheels and hup hup hup hup! Sanders works a kneebar for two seconds and the bell sounds for the first round. The Worlds Greatest Wrestling Announcer tells us - in his sexy accent and cool as fuck golf tournament announcer tone- that Sanders first debuted on TV in 1977. So he's not ancient here. Sanders is in a kneebar and does the great visual wondering if he should just turn heel and escape the hold or make a bad counter. He picks the bad counter and they roll around the mat some more. And the bell rings and noone is going to hate anyone, I'm thinking. Sanders with a wristlock and Collins counters it. Sanders brings a little hate with his Irish Whip. Collins hits a nice standing headscissors into a grape-vined pinning predicament. They switch over to a picture of the belt and they switch back to Collins getting the pin with some kind of roll-up. Oh geez. The Minutemen or maybe it was Firehose had a record called SEX WITH YOU IS LIKE WATCHING SCIENTIFIC WRESTLING. And it wasn't a compliment. Second fall is more fun, as they do the Second Caida thing of going from the mat to the air- as Sanders takes a fucking ginormous bump to the floor over the top rope after evading a Collins dropkick. Sanders comes back in and chinlocks to the end of the round. I dunno. Maybe they'll do the total lucha thing of having the third caida be all about the ventilation of hateful feelings. AWESOME! I'm correct. Sanders stomps on him while Collins is down. MEL SAHNDUHS GETS HIS FUST PUBLIC WAN-NING! Collins brings the forearm and dropkick, Sanders reverses it and gets a two counts and non-publicly-warned stomp by Sanders. Collins does more of his annoying highflying offense and Sanders starts spindling the arm with that move where he picks up the guys by his wrist and elbows with a knuckle-lock and a hand behind the elbow. Regal does it. It's cool. Sanders takes it to the end of the round with an armbar. Sanders with a backdrop and Mel Sanders crushes his testicles on the topopes. Greatest Announcer Of All Time is brilliant, "He certainly landed quite nastily on that topope." Ah, and they stop the match. I dig Sanders. Stil not feeling the love for Collins.

Peter "Tally Ho" Kaye vs Danny Collins- 3/30/1985: Tallyho Kaye is from Burnley. I'm assuming no great metal bands came out of Burnley. I'm sure someone will hip me to the significance. Tally Ho is overweight and old so I'm definately going for him in this contest. They fuck around for a while- wrenching each other's wrists and rolling about the place. Collins Johnny Saints out of a headscissors and they shake hands afterwards and I'm really hoping Tally Ho learned how to throw a fireball while chasing foxes. Or at least carves up Collins with a fork or something. He does get him in a cool submission with Collins arms behind his back being pushed down past his head. Collins counters into a Full Nelson TH escapes and Collins does the Rolling Cartwheel of Escape that makes me want Dick Murdock to run in and elbow him in the head. Tally Ho with the cool Quarternelson Variation- Man, somebody needs to revive the Quarternelson. It is the coolest of the Nelsons. They do the fun Keylock sequence where Collins does a standing backflip to reverse the hold. Tally Ho does ANOTHER Quarternelson variation to lead up to a manly Irish Whip. Collins counters by standing on Tally Ho's arm after a pressure hold. After a while, Collins does a big offensive flurry and moves and try to stay awake. This starts to really wear on my nerves. I go to the refridgerator and get a Big K diet cola and await the Jim Breaks match. I dunno. It's like a CZW main event, except instead of K-Drillers for two counts, think

Keylock sequences over and over again. Luckily, they fuck up the finish. God, just bring on the BREAKS.

Danny Collins vs Jim Breaks- 1984: They start is off with the playing of "My Country Tis Of Thee" and I'm wondering what is going on. I've seen what a crappy heel (Tally Ho) can do against Collins, let's see what Jimmy motherfucking Breaks can do. This is Collins first defense against Breaks after beating him for it earlier that year. Or so the Greatest Announcer Who Could Possibly Ever Exist explains to me. God, he's fucking great. Breaks works the same Keylock sequence but he draws you in by bobbing his head in defiance as Collins works to his feet and hits an awesome armdrag- awesome armdrags that only seem to show up in Break's matches... hmmm. Breaks is your motherfucking GOD by piefacing Collins after the bell rings. Breaks brings the motherfucking hate. Breaks cracks the joints in the ankle of Collins and does these cool ass carney ankle locks. Breaks suckers him in with a handshake and is fucking AWWWESOME being appalled when Collins rolls with the knee-to-the-gut attempt into a backdrop. Breaks with the nasty Shoulder-Separator Hammerlock/Chinlock. Then he goes into this fucking awesome Hammerlock/Cobra Clutch hold. He then morphs this into a THIRD Hammerlock variation where Breaks is driving his knee into Collins back. Collins does the Rolling Cartwheel of Escape that makes me want Jim Breaks to run in and break his arm in half. Oh wait. Breaks goes into the 3 round hellbent on cheating everyway he can. He sells Collins lame-ass "bone-splayer" before they trade Breaks Special attempts until Breaks says, "Oh fuck this shit" and pulls the hair. FIRST PUBLIC WARNING FOR PULLING YOUR OPPONENTS HAIR. Breaks has now been UNLEASHED to cheat like a motherfucker and the crowd starts getting fucking MOLTEN for Collins now because Breaks is the best motherfucking professional wrestler ever. I mean, Collins is Eddy Jackie. He can't create excitement on his own in a match- I just watched him versus a regular heel. HERE, Breaks gets him over to the Sting In the Rafters In 1999-level of over. The crowd HATES Breaks and Danny is their vehicle of punishment and Breaks is fucking MASTERFUL conveying his pain and pettiness and shitheadedness to the live crowd. Collins can't get him up in a Mexican Ceiling hold and they go back to a Vertical Base and Breaks just throws him down and pins him. Breaks enrages the rubes by raking Collins eyes after the first fall when the ref turns his back. The second fall is awesome as Breaks starts by working the arm and squealing like a freak while doing it. Collins procures "the Semi-Death Stranglehold"- or that's what I think the Greatest Announcer Ever Ever said. He would know more than me because he fucking rules. Breaks escapes by spinning around. Collins wrenches the arm and Breaks is spun into the corner. Breaks doesn't give a shit about you jerks and your rules and punches Collins in the side away from the ref's view and works a wrist while driving his knees into Collins' neck. Breaks feigns a shoulder injury and waits the bell out. God, Collins is only 17 years old in this. Collins reverses a Breaks Special into an elaborate roll-up to take the second fall. Breaks freaks out and mauls Collins face after the fall. Breaks gets his second public warning. Breaks comes out firing the third fall- mauling Collins face. Collins hits a dropkick and Collins knocks heads with the ref. Breaks gets the Boston Crab and the ref calls a No Contest because Collins is unconscious. Breaks is SOLID GOLD postmatch because he is righteously screwed. Breaks is motherfucking GOD.

~!~

K1 Hawaii Gran Prix 2005 -- Korean TV version
[DAN HERMAN]

Ah, the eighties, a soulless decade of social climbing preppies, voodoo economics, label consciousness. A decade devoid of MMA. But I don't want to sit this one out. So while my wrestling-based colleagues are indulging themselves in wrestling from the eighties, I instead present this review in the eighties style. Indeed this is a review as would be written by Patrick Bateman, lead character of American Psycho, the only accurate depiction of the 1980's currently in the popular consciousness.

Carter Williams v. Gary Goodridge - Semifinals: Carter Williams comes to the ring in a Fairtex robe over Fairtex shorts. Obviously he believes in one-stop shopping. Goodridge comes out in shorts and gloves. He needs to learn how to accessorize. These are two guys I'll never see at my country club. I think I sold the ref a gram of sugar and told him it was coke. That's what he gets for buying Times Square. Once they start fighting, I can't tell them apart, but it doesn't last long as the one in blue beats the one in red like an Eastern European prostitute. My secretary tells me that Gary Goodridge won. I wonder what my secretary would look like hanging from the high ceilings of my apartment. It overlooks Central Park.

Yusuke Fujimoto v. Marcus Royster - Semifinals: Fujimoto wears so much fringe, you'd think he was trying to get into The Club. His entrance music is a catchy number, although it may be a little too New Wave for my tastes. Royster wears a ripped t-shirt, obviously going for that SoHo look. I'm expecting Royster to devour Fujimoto like the bean soup at Texarkana, but this fight looks more like a scene outside a Greenwich Village leather bar. Somehow Fujimoto lands a hook that knocks Royster down and Royster opts not to get back to his feet. This is why the Japanese automakers are putting GM out of business.

Hong Man Choi v. Akebono - Superfight: Choi comes out to Billy Jean, a fine little pop number from Michael Jackson's seminal album "Thriller". Billy Jean is one of the highlights of the album, a semi-autobiographical song where Michael addresses a fan who claims he fathered her child. The Stevie Wonder inspired funk beat is a step beyond his work on the 1979 album "Off The Wall" and truly signifies Michael's arrival as his own artist, not just a member of a novelty R&B band. It's a song that would be as welcome in the dance club as it would the country club. A success on all levels, artistically and commercially.

For many the album's title track stands out in their minds. This is a direct result of the cinematic promotional piece that got a lot of airplay on upstart television station MTV. From the werewolf transition, to the zombie coreography, to the twist ending, Michael envisioned a masterpiece that causes the viewer to react both in horror and amusement. Veteran actor Vincent Price lended his voice for the song, giving it credence with a much wider audience. However, I don't feel as though this is a good album track, per se. Following a delightful duet with Paul McCartney and preceeding Beat It, Thriller seems starkly out of place on the album, despite it being next to the only songs that stand up to it. Indeed, Thriller is not an album song. It is its own event.

Beat It, however, is a bit of a misfire. Musically it stands strong, but thematically it shows Michael as needing to posture and act tough. This is against his best interests as the sensitive Baby Be Mine and the wonderfully deep but not ponderous Human Nature are unheralded classics on this album. One wonders what higher level of success this album may have achieved if Michael opted to showcase one of those two, or the aforementioned duet, with a video instead of Beat It.

Surprisingly it would take Micheal five years to follow up the unprecedented success of Thriller with Bad and while it would be easy to simply state that it's an appropriate title, it would be harsher criticism than is truly warranted. The problem with the album is that it showcases Michael's need to posture and hide his sensitive side. However, there are enough good pop hooks that the album still works commercially.

Choi by KO round one.

Gary Goodridge vs Yusuke Fujimoto- Finals: The two fighters don't understand the importance of having extra wardrobe on hand. The ring announcer, meanwhile, is wearing a tasteful Christian Dior suit with a white button down shirt from Ralph Lauren. Normally the white-on-white tie would look ridiculous, but a ring announcer can get away with it. He gave me his business card. It has a watermark.

Fujimoto is very aggressive to start, targetting the stomach and legs of the bigger man. Goodridge's defense is not looking so good, but he swings heavily enough to knock Fujimoto down with a grazing punch. For the rest of the round, Goodridge rushes Fujimoto like he just cancelled dinner reservations at Dorsia. The second round starts with Fujimoto again throwing combinations, trying to attack and retreat. Goodridge mainly eats them and swings heavily. The pace seems to have gotten to Fujimoto, though, as he stumbles a lot like my fiance on valium and percocet. He gets a brief burst of energy, like the feeling right off that first line of coke, and throws a good number of high kicks, but it's short lived. He can't floor Goodridge and he can hardly keep his legs under him. Round three is more of the same until someone in Fujimoto mistakes the ref for the towel boy at the Sport Club. The ref calls the match for Goodridge after that insult.

With one fight to go, and one that people might actually be interested in, I'm going to forgo the Patrick Bateman. Actually it's as much for my sanity as anything else. I found myself looking at the ring girl and wanting to cut her and play around with her blood. Other than screwing around with my subconscious, it's probably a failed experiment anyway.

BJ Penn v. Renzo Gracie - MMA: The ref for this match is Larry Landless. Actually, it may be Landless's evil twin, as he has bright white hair and a matching evil goatee. Landless hasn't been seen in the UFC since a certain Long Islander punched him.

Very short feeling out before Renzo takes BJ down into a half-mount. BJ actually uses a butterfly half-guard, which I don't think I've seen before. It shortly becomes a full guard. What

happens for the next four minutes is active but uninteresting. Renzo gets some short strikes and tries to pass, but Penn pretty much neutralizes Renzo's attempts at anything. Penn, meanwhile seems content to hang on to Renzo. With six seconds to go Renzo backs out of the guard and both men find their feet just in time for the bell. Assuming NSAC rules, which is a bad assumption, it would be 10-9 Renzo for the short-strikes and control.

Round two starts with some striking, but it's feeling out striking. Penn does land a nice right straight, though. It's not a spectacular display of skill, although Penn is landing a few and Renzo definitely reacts. It's five minutes on their feet. Renzo moves better, but Penn lands more and harder. No knockdown, though. 19 up in the NSAC world. Who knows in the K-1 Hawaii world.

More feeling out in round three. Yes, feeling out in round three. Renzo leans BJ against the ropes in a clinch, but Penn is scoring slightly with knees. Penn gets his first takedown of the night with a single-leg from there and I actually missed it the first time because the fight made me zone out. That tells you something. Penn has half-mount and stops Renzo from securing guard, but does little more than some tepid pounding from that position. Penn spends most of the round unable to pass Renzo's half guard, landing some strikes. Towards the end, he tries doing the stand-and-pass, without the same level of crowd-play he showed against Rodrigo. With seventeen seconds left, the stand-and pass works and he gets side mount but manages to do less from there. At the very end of the round he busts out a superslick transition to mount, literally at the bell. Why didn't something like that happen earlier. An easy decision for Penn here. The two men hug and congratulate one another and they switch teams as Penn's corners give Renzo water and vice versa.

Is this really the same guy who beat Matt Hughes in one round? MATT FUCKING HUGHES? Earlier in Penn's career the big criticism was that he lost heart. He could do quick victories no problem, but after a round he seemed to feel like wanted to be anywhere else. That's what he looked like here. Penn seems to have lost his fire. The Penn in this fight, the one who had little to offer Renzo, resembled the BJ Penn who faced Matt Serra and was obviously the better fighter, but had little interest in making a point of being so. I'd hate to think that he, like Vitor Belfort, has hit a mental wall and can't return to form. When in form he was, with little doubt, the best pound for pound fighter in the world. But there's hope for the Penns and Jacksons of MMA, if Jens Pulver can turn it around, so can they. I hope.

I killed Paul Owen.

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The Boy Who Loved Larry Zbyszko: Memories of a By-gone Time
[AG]

He would be fourteen soon. Fourteen glorious years. Fourteen glorious years it would be if, well, the accident had never happened. If they had never welded his head onto a Chia Pet, kept it going with some weirdass Ottoman Empire head-reanimation sorta battery thing his folks had

gotten in Minsk at some fucking fleamarket, the one where they got the "100% ByeloRussian. 200 Fucking Proof. Kiss My Red Yellow Hammer-n-sickle Ass" t-shirts that they would put over him -- semialive head, chia pet body, mournful spirit, dyslexic heart, tick tock you don't stop.

You don't stop. He yearned to be fully human, or more human than chia. But you can't erase time like so much errata. If Larry coulda, see, he'd never have beaten his wife, the plum that dropped from Verne's loins like a third ball, because, you see, in Minneapolis-St.Paul, all the old-school legit sell the arm types had a third ball. Because, see, once every year or three, a cold snap would hit. As the chill wind blew, all through most of Minnesota, except maybe the 10000 lakes, the balls would fall off. Clunk, clunk, clunk they go like the ch-ch-chia sound, those loathsome chants echoing off of locker room walls. See, he had to leave school --

Larry sucks!

Larry sucks!

Larry might not be the central states champ anymore, he thought as the coke someone spilled on him ate through his topsoil, but at least he was still working indies. ch-ch-champion, he thought, as all became topsoil, as he was unmoored from the table top, as the head left the chia for the final time, disconnected from the Ottoman relic, lifeforce zapped like Scott Baio, all glory and honor is yours almighty father, master of human chess, rest in Peace -- that was Larry's last fan, god love him.

~!~

ASSORTED 80s BRITISH WRESTLING

[DEAN RASMUSSEN]

Johnny Saint vs Jackie Robinson- 1/31/1981: I'm not in love with Johnny Saint like a lot of wrestling fans with lots of tapes. The more British wrestling I watch the more I think Saint is the 80s British RVD- what with the fruity embellishments and matches that make me fall asleep. But Rippa sent me this and I'm gonna review it because that's what kind of man I am. Jackie Robinson is Billy Robinson's cousin according to The Greatest Wrestling Announcer Ever. He's scrawny and YES, they take it to the mat right off the bat. Jackie does a cartwheel and he isn't BamBam Bigelow so I can't figure who I hate more in this. It's a fruity roll-up sequence out of a head scissors and I don't see a Public Warning coming out of this at any point. Saint with a keylock and head scissors and an hammerlock that Robinson slides to the ropes and Saint wins me back by taking the idiotic bump to the floor for no apparent reason. Saint does the thing where he rolls himself up into a ball and I remembered why I hate Saint. He does it again and me and my hatred for Saint are back to a vertical base. Saint wins with a rollblock into a roll-up. The upside: only 4 minutes long.

Steve Grey vs Bobby Ryan- 1/31/1981: From the same knockout tournament. Grey was fun in that other stuff I saw- as he was being slapped around by Jim Breaks. Here, in a heatless affair, I wonder how he will come off. Ryan is BEAUTIFULLY seedy so I'm going for him. They do

British matwork and a lot of those British pratfalls that noone else does and this is fine. Ryan does these neat attempts at flashpins and then hits a sweet enzuguiri. Grey answers with a dropkick and Grey pins him in three minutes. Okay. This tournament has turned out to be pretty painless.

THE FINAL: Steve Gray vs Johnny Saint: Saint works a headlock and goes whole, complete minutes without annoying me. Saint works the headlock like a champ- as Grey does all these cool moves to escape but Saint keeps the hold- a sort of non-hackneyed Keylock sequence. If Saint did more of this and less rolling himself in a ball, I would dig Johnny Saint. At the four minute point they do 23,000 pinfall attempts between Grey with a hammerlock and thousand moves that Tigermask stole from Saint and sped up to lightspeed. Saint works the knee and then for a Romero Special but can't hold it. Grey throws him into the corner and sinks in the Hammerlock that Saint counters into 400 nearfalls until the bell rings. The ref gives it to Gray though Saint controlled the match early. I'd give it to Saint just for wrestling his least irritating match ever.

Rollerball Mark Rocco vs Super Destroyer Pete Roberts- 10/1/1980: Mean Machine Rollerball Mark Rocco is the guy that I have fallen in love with after watching this giant batch of British 80s wrestling. He's such a dick and he has hair that makes him look like a William and Mary alumni divorcee trying to pick up waitresses at Applebees. Plus he can just fuckin GO. I dig this Roberts guy to. They do most high-flying wristlock sequence I have ever seen. It was beautiful. Then he does a Cravate better than Fit Finlay. He just rips Robert's head out from the roots. Plus he cheats more than any wrestler in England. Right in front of the ref. He's boldfaced about it- so he isn't as fun Jim Breaks, but he is fucking savage and hard-edged and could have done well wrestling in Alabama in 1983. His use of EVIL is pretty beautiful- floatover into a wristlock- CHEAT- beautiful armdrag into a cravate- CHEAT- BEAUTIFUL facelock with the bone of the forearm driven into the nose- CHEAT! Rocco does it all. Roberts starts using his two stone weight advantage to his advantage and starts uppercutting and bodyslamming the smaller Rocco. Rocco does the great psychological thing of saying, "Fuck this. He's two stone bigger than me. TWO STONE! Fuck that shit! I'm cheating!" Rocco knees him in the stomach after a break. Roberts uses his power advantage to maul Rocco a little and settles into a headscissors- doing the awesome detail of dropping his leg hard over Rocco's face when reapplying the pressure. Rocco bites to escape and kicks Roberts in the stomach after the bell for the round sounded. (TWC goes to a commercial and I try- my DAMNEDEST!- to not masturbate to the terrifying British stripper on the Download To Your Cellphone commercial.) Rocco knees Roberts in the face and drops a batch of assbeat on Roberts and gets THE FUHST PUBLIC WOHRNING. Rocco breaks an armbar by punching Roberts dead in the stomach and this is weird because usually the ref doesn't let them go at it so blatantly- a feature that makes Rocco and Breaks and Finlay matches so much fun- in that you've really got rules to break- as opposed to- you know- everything now. Roberts is getting shortshrift in this review. He is also a load of fun in this- as he is pummeling Rocco more than your British babyface would and is great at being both really stoic AND very good at being righteously indignant about being pulled off Rocco when he's giving him a taste of the spoiler. Yeah, this match is pretty hard-edged, more Southern fistfight than British style match. Rocco gets a public warning for crushing a

prone Roberts with a toprope splash- which is odd because I would have thought all of the straight rights to the face would have brought it earlier. Rocco takes the first fall with a half crab. Round five starts and Rocco stomps on his knee and then throws him over the toprope and this match is pretty fucking insane for 80s British wrestling- as Roberts does a full Jerry Estrada to the floor. They get back into the ring and Rocco goes for a takedown but Roberts crushes his skull with a stomp. They kinda fuck around until the fifth round ends and so they can have the final round with the babyface a fall down. But not before Rocco works one of those armbars that Regal eluded to when he said, "It's how you do the armbar" when a "smart" asked him if ECW was better because it didn't have a bunch of armbars. The final round begins and The Greatest Wrestling Announcer Ever gets over the fact that Roberts has to knock out Rocco to win and will just get a draw if he scores a pinfall. Rocco beats on Roberts early but misses a toprope splash. Roberts throws him into the Tree of Woe and gets a stomp in. He hits a big backdrop and fucking BEAUTIFUL elbow drop to score the pin and the draw. That's quality Professional Wrestling. Rocco is a giant asshole postmatch and you are happy about that.

Big Daddy vs Giant Haystacks- 6/20/1981: Giant Haystacks was Loch Ness in WCW. Here he is 5000 pounds lighter (so he's 490ish here. I guess that would be what 20 stone translates to.) Big Daddy is the fat guy that Dynamite Kid talked about carrying to a thousand tag matches in his book. He is more physically repulsive with his brand of morbid obesity than Giant Haystacks. He's got that weird fat area that droops down to mid-thigh from the groin region. One would assume that this would suck. But you gotta watch the wrestling if you are going to review the wrestling. But yeah, this is horrendously shitty. Haystacks does bump around the ring like a super poorman's One Man Gang and he does take a big bump to the floor onto a bunch of flowers on the table by the apron. And that's your match. I don't want to know how Big Daddy took a leak with that wad of gut in the way.

Giant Haystacks vs Kwik-Kik Lee- 1/29/1982: Awwwwwesome! AKIRA MAEDA! Akira Maeda takes on future Loch Ness! I can only say WHAT IN THE FUCK. Maeda is 15 stone 1. The match is based around Haystacks being really fat. Maeda knows how to do the Pro Style and he threatens to dump Haystacks over the side and the crowd pops big for the future l'enfant terrible and RINGS founder. They go back to proving that Haystacks is really fat. Haystacks gets public warning for being fat on top of Maeda in the ropes for two long. Haystacks lumbers very slowly. Maeda does a lot of dropkicks and the crowd loves him. They love his fiery babyface comeback and Haystacks gets his second public warning cutting him off very slowly and fatly. Haystacks does a very fat splash and knocks out Maeda. I assume that would be the only way Maeda would want to go out in this.

Jim Breaks vs Sammy Lee: Sammy Lee is Satoyu Sayama who became the first TigerMask and Jim Breaks is his fucking daddy. The REAL question isn't if this match can compare to Tiger Mask vs Dynamite Kid but does this match compare to the absolute motherfucker of a match that follows this. I assume this is 1981. Breaks is from Bradford and he hates you and Tiger Mask. Sayama does all this fancy flipping stuff that Breaks avoids so Breaks tries to break Sayama's wrist at the first opening he gets. Breaks flies like a freak when Sayama counters out. Sayama with a great fucking armdrag- awesome armdrags that only seem to appear in Breaks

matches... wait. Breaks is fucking SOLID GOLD freaking out completely when Sayama does the Tiger Mask spinning takedown. Breaks sells the Indian Deathlock like sheer death. He makes the ropes and tells Sayama to WATCHA STEP, BOOOYEEEE. Sayama is a fool and tries to trade wristlocks with Breaks. Breaks punches Sayama in the stomach when he gets tired of trading wristlocks. Breaks is awesome feigning a rush at Sayama between rounds, popping the crowd, bringing the fun. Breaks cheats like a motherfucker, choking Sayama to set up the first Quarter Nelson of the night. They run the ropes and Sayama gets the first pinfall. Breaks isn't happy though he makes everyone else happy. The second fall starts and Breaks wants the rubes to shut their lousy stinkin mouths. Breaks comes out cheating- punching Sayama in the head behind the ref's back. Sayama goes hogwild with his own punches to the face. The ref goes to give Sayama a Public Warning- Breaks rolls him up for the cheatingest win of the evening. Breaks riles up the rubes and I love this shit. Breaks starts the third fall with a Breaks Special that Sayama counters out of after selling like a champ. Breaks punches Sayama in the stomach to escape but gets a Public Warning. Sayama counters out of an Irish Whip with a Tiger Mask flurry of quick kicks and a roll-up for the win. Postmatch, Breaks is solid gold as the worst sport ever in defeat. I love him so...

Sammy Lee vs Mark Rocco- 4/4/1981: Goddam. This match is a fucking spectacular masterpiece. Rocco can go just as fast as Sayama and there are parts of this match that I've never seen anything as fast and graceful. They do this one Mexican Armdrag sequence out of a Cravate that is just fucking breath-taking- like Angel Azteca versus Blue Panther 1994 breathtaking. Rocco just rolls with Sayama and they fly through the match and when Rocca wants to slow it down, he rips Sayama's head off with a Cravate. Rocco then decides that beating on him will get the crowd even more behind him and he beats on him and then leans way into Sayama's kicks and flying shoulderblocks and what have you. Second round is more Rocco cheating to win, bumping big off a Flair bump off the toprope. Rocco is masterful putting the match together- hitting all these nasty heel moves but letting Sayama get in every bit of his offense. Rocco gets a Public Warning for dropping him stomach-first across the toprope. Sayama hits a Quebradora and gets the pin to take the first fall. Rocco starts the second fall with a Public Warning for continually punching Sayama while Sayama was prone on the ground. Sayama counters out of an Irish Whip and Rocco punches him in the stomach and... the ref disqualifies Rocco. Beautiful if abrupt match. Rocco and Sayama is the money matches of the Sayama/TM experience. Rocco is fucking awesome.

Sammy Lee vs John "Muscles" England- 2/14/1981: England is from Wolverhampton and someone will tell me if that is significant. Nick McManus comes out and is a heat machine and Sayama wants a piece of his ass now. Johnny England poses with his bodybuilding physique and he has the tassles that say British Gronda of the 80s. England blows about everything he tries and the Gronda comparison is a comparison with some legs. He does eat a kick to the head well. And doesn't completely fuck up taking a Quebradora. But Sayama is generally having to wrestle for two. It goes on for a while. Sayama does a NICE Side Suplex. The armdrags are so shitty looking that it makes you understand why Jim Breaks and Mark Rocco are so good. England walks out and gets counted out and there ya go.

Sammy Lee vs "Cyanide" Sid Cooper- 10/11/1980: This is Sayama's debut in the UK. The Greatest Wrestling Announcer Ever noted that Sayama started his career in 1978 so he was a young buck unleashed on the British wrestling scene here in the heady transitional days of 1980. Cooper fucking rules looking completely baffled while taking all of Sayama's (what had to be fucking mindblowing) offense in 1981 like a Destructore. Cooper makes with the rabbit punches and the Sayama juggernaut is stopped for a minute. His punches to the stomach during the pinning predicament were a nice touch. Cooper whips out the Pressure Holds to work into a Full Nelson and Sayama flips out of it. Cooper rabbit punches to cut him off. Cooper mauls Sayama after the bell and gets his first Public Warning. Second round, Cooper with a backbreaker. Sayama escapes and Cooper cuts him off with punches to the throat. Sayama chops out and does the fucking awesome dropkick that misses because he jumps a good three inches OVER THE HEAD of Cooper. Cooper bumps big to the floor and can't make it back in in time to beat the 10 count. I like Sayama and Tiger Mask. God, I completely loved most of the guys he wrestled in Britian in the 80s.

!!

And I think of your eyes in the dark and I see the star
And I look to the light and I might wonder right where you are
SINGLES GOING STEADY
All the gods in the sky way up high see the world spinning 'round
But the sun and the moon and the stars are so far from the ground
!!

Sgt.Slaughter vs Iron Sheik- WWF- Boot Camp Match-6/16/84-MSG-[PHIL SCHNEIDER, TOM KARRO-GASSNER]:

PAS: Amazing match, which I am going to have a hard time believing will be surpassed by anything else on the WWF 80's DVD. The pre-match has really great pageantry with Prvt. Terry Daniels coming out in dress blues, presenting the colors. While Sheik comes in with Ayatollah Blassie waving the Iranian flag. Slaughter sprints to the ring and totally beats on the Sheik for the first five minutes or so, hitting him in the face with the whip, headbutting him with the helmet. Sheik is totally dominated early and only takes over when he reversals Slaughter into the turnbuckle and Slaughter takes his giant bump to the floor. Large parts of the middle of the match are built around Sheik using his loaded boot, they do a lot of teases with the boot, transitions around the using the boot. There is a point where Slaughter loads his own boot and hits a diving stomp which splits the top of the Sheik's head open where he just sprays blood. The finish is really great as Sheik hits two nice suplexes but can't put Slaughter out. Sheik unties the boot and smacks against the turnbuckle to load it, but Sarge hits a huge lariat. They then both crawl for the boot with Slaughter getting it first and smashing the Sheik with it for the pin. Just an awesome, brutal, perfectly paced war.

TKG: So the premise of this match is that you can only win by pinfall. Its an odd counterintuitive premise, Slaughter of course has cobra clutch as a finisher while Sheik has camel clutch, and we think of submissions as being more decisive these days and submission matches being blow off matches. But FUCK the premise works really really well as submissions would've kind of

slowed down this brawl and the ref on the outside of ring who can only enter ring to count falls means every near fall takes a long time. The ref needs the time to get into ring so every three count feels like a ten count...to pin someone you need to knock them out. Slaughter is a guy who at times I've found to be such a over the top bumper that his bumps feel like comedy spots...here there was none of that as his first big bump was suitably nasty...while Iron Sheik turns out to be a closet Jerry Estrada fan and takes a bunch of big bumps including a over the top corner of table and knee of ring announcer bump. Phil talks about the pacing of this. I've watched an entire DVD and a half of high end 80's WWF and well there is a type of WWF pacing that just leaves me constantly disappointed "ooh this would be a great point for Don Muraco to get in some offense but this is WWF so this is where the match ends instead". You know exactly when the finisher section is and it often feels tacked on. With Slaughter and Sheik fighting for knockouts...everything felt like the match could end right there and just paced in a way that left me emotionally happy.

The match is filled with just awesome awesome exchanges, and really great execution (alot of the 80s matches may give you one of those or the other or both from one participant but not his opponent) but this gives you it all:

At one point Sheik stretches his leg out so his boot is on top turnbuckle and tries to ram Slaughter's head into the point of the boot. Slaughter grabs the point of boot to prevent it. Sheik tries a second time. Slaughter blocks a second time. Sheik pushes third time harder so Slaughter's head crashes into the post and he eats the pointed boot to his belly.

During the brawl on the floor Sheik lifts a padded chair for a chairshot and he lifts it like he's performing a clean and jerk holding it above his head in a way that makes it look like he's lifting a really heavy chair and then he just throws it in a really reckless looking manner. Slowed down it's a pretty safe chairshot as Slaughter is hit with cushion but Sheik makes it look nastier than your average dangerous un-protected chairshot.

Bruiser Brody vs Terry Gordy- 5/6/1986-[DEAN RASMUSSEN]: An anonymous benefactor found this match and it surfaced. It's Worldclass and it's a barbed wire match. The barbed-wire is wrapped around the ropes and Brody is KINGSIZED bumping around to stay out of the ropes. Brody tries to power Gordy in and Gordy powers out so they both go sideways into it and Brody starts carving him up and starts stomping on him and they go back to fighting off the other. Gordy punches Brody in the head to set up carving Brody up. God, I think one would rather go into the barbed-wire than take the hellish beating that Gordy supplies fighting to stay out of the barbed-wire. Gordy crushes Brody's skull with a gnarley as hell piledriver and after the two count drives him straight into the barbed-wire facefirst. Gordy is GOD-LIKE beating the living dogshit out of Brody and finally starts firing back. Brody starts wailing and stomping on Gordy and Gordy starts firing back and this is fucking awesome. This is how you do a deathmatch-FEEL the danger of the gimmick and fight like motherfuckers to get away and force your opponent into the "death" part of the match. No fruity, elaborate set-ups. No wandering around the ring. Just focus and struggle and pain. A fucking 9 minute piece and clinic on simple psychology and brawling. Brody just fucking brings the assbeat at the 7 minute mark and Gordy

responds with urgency- though Brody grinds barbed-wire into his head for his troubles. Gordy punches Brody in the stomach with brass-knuckles and Brody gets them away from him and knocks him out. Odd ending to a fucking beautiful match.

NACHO BERRERA AND [partner] V BARON AND CRUSHER: AWA. 1984. 2 OF 3 FALLS. TAG TITLES ON THE LINE- [AG]: If you're like me, you wonder how Nacho Berrera got a tag title match, much less a two of three falls affair. Nacho is built roughly like Freddie Patek. I really don't know what to say about this match -- Vince McMahon is getting set to take over the world, and Verne counters with, well, something less than commercially viable. There are metaphors to be drawn here. Lessons to be learned about planned obsolescence. I had to stop watching the match to write this much. It made me think of this girl I knew, once, who used to love hippie music and movies like 'Ode to Billy Joe', who ended up killing herself in Pittsburgh, acc. to published reports. Just a preordained sadness, all too real, like Flair getting shat on during the 90s. Not the kind of thing I want from wrestling. I don't need to see Baron and Crusher as tag champs. I know what death looks like and I know the inevitability of hell.

"Wildfire" TOMMY RICH vs. BUZZ SAWYER- 1982- Georgia Championship Wrestling-(Ryan Muldoom): The match actually begins as Rich - your NWA National Heavyweight Champion and the "most popular wrestler of 1981," our ring announcer tells us - going up against Rick Starr. Right after the referee rings the bell, Kevin Sullivan and Buzz Sawyer make it out to ringside and demand that Rich stop wrestling nobodies and take on Sawyer. Rich obliges, and the prelude to the preamble to the preface of "The Battle of Atlanta" has begun! Sawyer takes the advantage with a nice bodyslam followed by an even nicer strut, all head bobs and cocky confidence. Rich's body language spells "P'shaw," and they're back to it. Hey! What's this?!? "Nature Boy" Ric Flair is joining Gordon Solie on commentary. He's proud of Rich for taking on Sawyer, as Sawyer hits an armdrag and Rich does that thing of twisting his hips and rotating his arm at the shoulder to imply that he's not really warmed up. I'd like to think he does the same before getting ready to throw pocket change into the soda machine when in the mood for a cold Fanta Orange. Rich returns with his own great bodyslam and two armdrags before Sawyer heads to the outside to regroup and do a little dance that gives me the impression that he's trying not to shit his black singlet. Flair going a mile a minute of commentary and I can't keep up: Atlanta, Georgia, pride, no shortcuts, what it takes to be a champion, whoooooo! Sawyer back in, Rich controls with a side headlock, while Solie declares that Flair will be "airborn" 330 days over 1982, defending the "10,000 dollar, gold and diamond studded" NWA World Heavyweight Championship belt. I bet Flair and Jay Leno were vying for the title of most frequent flyer miles in the country in the early 80's. I like Rich's headlock - grasping his wrist as opposed to hand-in-hand - and Sawyer is caught in it; not even a whip into the ropes and a leapfrog can keep him out of Wildfire's grasp. The crowd chants "Go, Tommy, Go!." Rich blocks Sawyer's attempt at an atomic drop, ducks under for his own successful atomic drop, and Sawyer's selling approaches Fatty Arbuckle-levels of comic reach. Rich with a dropkick - a really fucking great dropkick - and back to the headlock. Sawyer works Rich into the corner, lands a couple of shoulder blocks and a couple of punches that scream "Georgia Championship Wrestling: Punch like you mean it." Rich reverses the Irish whip into the opposing turnbuckle, catches Sawyer with another headlock takedown, and the females in the crowd have gone

absolutely apeshit over Rich's controlling of the (not quite Mad Dog level) Sawyer. Flair is awesome at putting over Rich as a worthy competitor - a notch below Flair himself, but being a notch below Flair means you're among the elite in professional wrestling. Who could disagree? Flair notes that he likes Rich's strategy of working consistently on one body part to weaken his opponent and remain in control of the match. It's like wrestling 101 with this guy. I love it. Sawyer slides under the bottom rope, but Rich never releases the headlock and drags him back inside the squared circle, drapping him over the top rope in process. Solie pays tribute to Rich's "bulldog" determination and I pay tribute to Solie's "Wild Turkey" dedication and grab a Miller Lite. Sawyer finally whips Rich into the rope and catches him with what looks like a superkick variation (blame the static studio camera for the lackluster description ... or my lack of wrestling knowledge. Your call). Upon impact, Rich takes a stupid, Heenan level human pinball bump through the ropes and the prelude to the preamble to the preface of "The Battle of Atlanta" heats up. Sawyer drops his straps and goes outside to further injure Rich. Dragging Rich back in the ring, Sawyer is a machine: punching, eye-raking, probably even cutting the cheese. Rich hits an uppercut to Sawyer's belly. Solie calls it as a headbutt and my love for him grows deeper. Sawyer misses a shoulderblock to the corner, and Rich returns with a fistdrop. I like. Into the ropes goes Sawyer and both men trade leapfrogs, and then get caught in a double-leapfrog, mid-air belly buck that puts both competitors prone on the canvas. And we discover this match's Achilles' Heel. Solie with the attempt at a recovery saying their head's collided in mid-air. Fair enough. Sawyer makes it to his feet first and misses with a body-splash ... thing. Rich goes for the cover and Sullivan hits the ring. Rich goes to work on that devil-worshipping sonuvabitch. Sullivan and Sawyer start double teaming Rich and Scrappy McGowen is wildly calling for the bell. SUDDENLY! to Rich's rescue it's ... Mike Rotunda? Lou Graham? No! Jim Garvin! Huh?!? Ok ... Sawyer and Sullivan leave the ring in disgrace. I could watch this shit for hours.

WAHOO MCDANIEL AND RODDY PIPPER VS KELLY KINISKI AND BEN ALEXANDER-Mid-Atlantic, September 1983-[AG]: This is floating around online. Is it worth seeing? Yes. You will want to see Ben Alexander's glorious beard. You will want to see Wahoo's provocative floatover suplex that ends the match. You will want to see the glory of Wahoo and Pipper working stiff on Kiniski, who does most of the work for his side. You will want to hear David Crockett likening the trials of Pipper and Wahoo to those faced by Americans, "sick of being pushed around by the rest of the world." You likely will want to see this match, if for no other reason than this being a rare teaming of Wahoo and Roddy.



Dick Murdock vs Bruiser Brody- Sometime in the 80s in Japan- [DEAN RASMUSSEN]: Folks have bringing the great Brody matches to the matches board. A man known as BNewt posted this and he didn't have a lot of other information. I am told the announcing is annoying but I downloaded this at work and am watching it on my lunchbreak (2 tenderloin sandwiches, two chocolate chip cookies, the optional lunch/breakfast, house brand Dorito knock-offs) so I don't annoy my co-workers, I can't hear commentary (this is the Japanese version. There is a version on the St Louis dvds but the postmatch save is cut off and Larry Mastyk is as annoying making the call over this as anyone else could possibly be.) Brody comes in beating everybody in his path with a chain. Murdock is pensive- waiting for Brody to settle down and put the chain down. They feign some takedown attempts and then remember that they are Dick Murdock and Bruiser Brody and just start beating the hell out of each other- with Brody clubbing Murdock to death until Murdock ducks a Big Boot and hits a Texas Outlaws Dropkick '69 and Brody collapses into the corner so Murdock can crush him with an elbow. Brody ducks the second one and finally hits the Big Boot. Murdock sells it by rolling to the floor. They lock-up and Murdock works the arm- twisting then dropping the elbow on it. Brody reverses it by sending Murdock into the ropes and not being knocked over. Murdock is making the match great by using his facial expressions to show that he is quietly freaking out inside trying to figure out what to do with this big motherfucker. Subtlety is the greatness of Murdock.

Murdock smashes Brody's face with elbows after escaping a headlock with an Atomic Drop. Brody runs Murdock into the ropes and they fuck up a leapfrog and Murdock covers seamlessly with a Snapmare and more fucking BEAUTIFUL elbows dead in the face after wrenching in a chinlock. More small things by Murdock to draw you into the match- like his face of relief and maniacal desperation as he yanks on Brody's head. Brody fights out of headlock by sending Murdock into the ropes and Murdock leapfrogs and hits a Sunset Flip for two. They switch to Murdock's face and he might as well have a frickin' thought balloon that says. "Okay, I got this motherfucker now." It's amazing how absolutely complete a wrestler Dick Murdock was. They pan to Brodie and Brody is fucking great with the "What the fuck is going here" reaction. THAT is psychology, kids. THAT is what makes folks give a shit about the wrestling match. They stand and try to figure out what is going on. Brody storms out of the ring and runs into the crowd- that wisely disperses- and the crowd HUTS along. Brody comes back into the ring and starts over. Brody bulls Murdock into the corner and starts stomping the hell out him. Murdock is fucking KINGSIZED leaning facfirst into Brody's running kick to the face. Murdock has an AWESOME comeback with straight punches to the face and then screws the pooch by trying a suplex that Brody blocks. Brody goes for a single leg takedown but Murdock grabs the arm so Murdock bulls him into the ropes and just fucking DESTROYS him with a kick to the face. Brody then goes for a Piledriver but Murdock fights out by dropping to a knee. HEY, Kawada stole that from Murdock. Murdock starts crushing Brody's knee and then spindling Brody's knee with a step-over toehold. Then he stomps the hamstring and punches Brody in the face and throws him into the ropes, misses a clothesline and takes a the full brunt of a fabulous dropkick by Brody, splaying to the floor and blading like a Texan after Brody posts him. God, by the second posting, Murdock has full plasma coating. Brody stomps him as he tries to get back in and Murdock hits the floor again. Brody Powerslams him into the ring and gets a table and throws it into the ring- setting it up longways because this is fucking old school as a motherfucker. Murdock gets the drop on him and slams his head into the table twice before hitting a Brainbuster for two- and somewhere in there opened up a fuckin artery. Brody hits a Flying Crossbody for two and they do the mutual dropkicks and punching each other in the face before Brody smacks the ref and get DQed. They beat up everybody at ringside and go back to beating the living dogshit out of each other. Jimmy Snuka comes in and they double team Murdock until The Masked Superstar (?) makes the save? They brawl into the crowd. Ah 80s Japan- GREAT wrestling, same DQ ending.

EDDY GUERRERO V GENGHIS KHAN [AG]: This was on the 'Matches, Matches Board', and I assume it is from the 80s, given that Eddy looks like Stone Cold Scott Baio. Genghis looks much younger than his however many centuries here. Genghis looks like a Mexican lucha guy wearing a Yellow Peril mask. Love those Mexican ethnic sensitivities. Eddy and Genghis walked through some mat sequences for the first few minutes. A feeling out period, if you will. Both guys are blown up by the end of it, and Genghis Khan becomes Genghis STALL. Genghis works some offense, then Eddy starts flashing moveset -- the Starman dropkick, a hurracarana, and some other augurs of future latino Jesushood. Genghis goes to one knee, and plays for a handshake; Eddy falls for it, we see an orgy of armtwistin' good fun. Eddy sells for a couple of minutes, then he gets a couple of Zenky slams in. Sometime during the second one, Genghis

submitted or something. A very weird match, great for curiosity seekers and Eddy completists, but not really necessary viewing.

BOB BACKLUND vs "MAGNIFICENT" DON MURACO- 3/20/1983- WWF CHAMPIONSHIP BOUT- TEXAS DEATH MATCH- [RYAN (Mul)DOOMSTONE]: Late in my life, I've developed a strange love for Bob Backlund matches, despite only having seen about a half-dozen of the good ones. I can't say for sure what it is. Part of it is a fascination with a time in wrestling that I wasn't really clued in to. I remember when Backlund was the champ, and my friends and I all agreed he was a chump. How? I have no idea. But he was the champ for such a long time that it just seemed ... odd. Looking back in hindsight, it seems even odder still, the way he was booked, often doing heel-ish things to retain his belt. I remember the cover of "The Wrestler" (maybe "Inside Wrestling") with the photo of Arnold Skaaland hitting Sgt. Slaughter over the head with the chair, after Slaughter had locked Backlund deep into the cobra clutch, this heelish behavior the only way Skaaland knew to keep the belt on his boy. I watched the Snuka vs. Backlund cage match on the WWE 80's DVD set, and I was amazed at the heelish style Backlund wrestled with, even as the babyface - bootscrapes, eye gouging, whatever. It just seemed like such an odd fucking choice as champ for a Northeast-centric promotion - the goofy white boy from Minnesota. Yet, maybe it made sense (and the Garden sellouts say as much) - maybe the same way New York adopted a goofy white boy from Indiana named Letterman as the undisputed champ. I don't know. Anyway, this is apparently the re-match from a month's prior Backlund/Muraco match, a match with another instance of weird Backlund behavior, where he refused to break the chicken-wing and went nuts, punching refs and just going loony. And that's one thing I enjoy about Backlund - he really DOES seem loony. He has this half-stupid look in his eyes, this crazy wrestling machine who couldn't read about himself in the mags if he wanted to, but he does know how to wrestle. And what was the deal with Skaaland? As he's introduced, I hear the crowd distinctly booing. Or at least I thought I did, until Muraco is introduced and I hear what a full MSG booing actually sounds like. Muraco is masterful just standing there soaking in their derision. Backlund gets the full-on hero pop, and NOW Muraco eggs the crowd on, flailing and protesting and generally acting pissed. THAT is some genius timing. It seems to come natural to Muraco. Backlund controls early with some goofy wrenching headlocks (that the crowd loves and chants along with), along with the forearm smashing. I don't think Backlund ever really punched - he forearm smashed, and he stayed within the rule book on that count. Muraco picks Backlund up for the back suplex, but Backlund powers through and remains in control with the headlock. At this point, why this is a Texas Death Match, I do not know. Both men are in trunks (not even taping their fists), there's a ref in the ring checking for a choke, and we've begun with a five-minute headlock. Which is not to say it's not fun. Backlund rings Muraco's ears in that goofy way that wrestlers used to do ... and goes back to the headlock. Gorilla Monsoon is great getting the headlock - the HEADLOCK! - over as a relentlessly brutal hold to maintain. It's taking its toll on Muraco! But Muraco fights his way out with forearm smashing of his own, and hits dropkick. Backlund down, Muraco goes up to the top, but before he can launch his aerial attack ... Backlund locks in another side headlock! Wow. And everyone digs it, even me. Muraco works his way to his feet, and I just noticed that Bob Newhart is doing an excellent job of officiating this match. Even if it is billed as a Texas Death Match. During the latest headlock, Gorilla Monsoon notes that Backlund is an exemplary

representative of professional wrestling, always taking the time to visit children's homes, hospitals, high schools and colleges to sit down and talk with amateur wrestlers. Hospitals? Children's homes? Which word did he accent? It makes a difference. Muraco finally breaks the headlock with a shoulder block off the ropes. Rolling slam to Backlund, who continues rolling and wraps Muraco up in a two-count. Backlund with a slam to Muraco, and as Muraco sells it, Backlund lurches towards him like an absolute LOON and that's what I love about this guy. And back to the headlock! Muraco finally breaks it with a low-blow. Monsoon calls it a questionable move. IT'S A FUCKING TEXAS DEATH MATCH! Muraco with that second-rope, backwards springing splash thing. Two-count. Muraco lays down some boots and sends Backlund to the floor. Muraco goes out after him and drops Backlund throat first on the guardrail. Backlund gets draped across the apron, and and Muraco lands a couple leg drops. Good stuff. Muraco up to the top and Ref Newhart pulls him away?!?! What the fuck? Even Monsoon can't believe it, saying the ref's only job in this match is to raise the hand on the victor. Goddamn right, Gorilla. "If I were Don Muraco, I would deck the referee!" Fucking A, Gorilla. Backlund rams Muraco into the ringpost to regain control, and Muraco brings the blood. Backlund returns the favor and drops Muraco over the guardrail. The crowd goes bananas. B A N A N A S. Muraco tries to re-enter the ring and Backlund catches him with a weird, JYD-esque headbutt. Somehow it works, and Muraco keeps on bleedin'. Backlund gets Muraco back in the ring, and AGAIN with the bark-at-the-moon look in his eyes! He kisses his fist and fucking POUNDS Muraco. Muraco is a bloody mess. Another punch from Backlund and Muraco forces some pinball bumping. Backlund with the bootscape I love so much. Backlund punches the living shit out of Muraco as Muraco is on his knees, and Muraco leans all the way back to the ground in the prone position. Best selling I've seen in a long time. Backlund is just punching a bloody Muraco dead in the face in the middle of the ring and the crowd is loving it. Backlund comes off the ropes and gets hit with an awesome Muraco powerslam, but the Magnificent One can't stay on top for the cover. Must be the blood loss. Muraco with the knees across Backlund's throat. He goes up to the top, but Backlund catches him with a slam. Backlund looks like he's going for a side-suplex, but gets Muraco up into a backbreaker. Muraco slides over top, and they go into a weirdly awesome, reversing, bridging, suplexing section. Suddenly, Backlund hits a back suplex and gets the three. Weird. B A N A N A S goes the crowd. Great match, but not a great Texas Death Match.



Ted DiBiase/Terry Funk vs Jumbo Tsuruta/ Giant Baba- 4/7/83- All Japan Pro Wrestling- [DEAN RASMUSSEN]: (Thanks Duke.) I think this is the right date and Baba and Tsuruta are defending the belts so I'm pretty positive. Funk and DiBiase do a lot of calisthenics pre-match and they both have great 80s hair- with DiBiase rocking the Orange Julius manager feathered wings. Jumbo is younger but starting to look angry and cranky. Funk still has his knees and he and Jumbo are magic. DiBiase punches Jumbo offhandedly in the face it was 2000 times better than any punch I saw on RAW last night. Ted with the knife-edge and Jumbo's had enough. Ted and Funk hug a lot after the two Jumbo Irish Whips and Funk tags in and starts beating on Jumbo until Jumbo can armdrag him away- just like a good Ricky Steamboat match. DiBiase comes in to bully Jumbo around until Jumbo gets sick of it and Powerslams DiBiase with a 3/4 level DiBiase Powerslam. DiBiase fucking rules by beating the fuck out of Jumbo in the corner. Baba tags in and they work out of the headlock and they kill time until Baba and Funk get in the ring and Funk goes all weird- chewing the scenery and flying all into the ropes and crawling on the ground and bumping all over the ring all wacky. Jumbo tags back in and Funk goes back to Texas ass-stomper style, clubbing the arm and driving a knee in to the arm and then stomping the arm. Ted tags in and mauls Jumbo's arm some more- driving all of his weight into the arm and then allowing Jumbo back up so Jumbo can get pissed off and smack DiBiase and the HEAT kicks in. Ted fucking KILLS Jumbo with a chop on a ropebreak and Jumbo makes the WELCOME TO THE BEGINNING OF THE

PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING MATCH face and they start beating the fuck out of each other. Funk comes in and kills him with a piledriver and a neckbreaker. DiBiase says, "Yo, fucker, here's how you do a Powerslam." Ted misses a second rope elbow drop and Jumbo brings his own brand of Texas Ass-Stomp to the proceedings. DiBiase sells the double team like... well... Terry Funk- rolling longways backwards to his stomach from a double boot. Funk breaks it up with a with a lavish save tying himself up in the ropes. Baba neckbreaks Dibiase and then Funk hits a Rolling Cradle. Jumbo fucking freaks out and starts beating the fuck out of Funk. DiBiase and Funk stomp on Jumbo and Baba grabs DiBiase and gets him in a Boston Crab. And it's over? Man, Jumbo and DiBiase should have run all over Louisiana and Arkansas, up through Missouri and into Texas. Then they could have fought across the Carolinas and into Virginia over to Tennessee because postmatch, THERE! THERE is the hate- the HATE we have been dreaming of....

BUDDY JACK ROBERTS/TERRY GORDY V R&R EXPRESS [AG]: Mid-South, 1985. The incomparable Joel Watts flying solo on the commentary track. Taped in New Orleans and this was white hot, off of something called the "Hall Of Fame Matches" tape. The body of the match is as expected: Ricky Morton getting pistolwhipped by the Freebirds, who tag in and out with an alacrity that only underscores their ferociousness. Excellent chicanery -- Morton gets thrown over the top rope, thwacking the wooden floor of the arena. Gibson gets tagged in and the finish somehow evolves into Gordy giving Gibson a crappy powerbomb. This was 20 years ago, so indulge me in thinking that a crappy powerbomb in 1985 beat the hell out of no powerbomb at all -- the vertical suplex was still a finisher in some prelim matches, so Gordy really was bringing the wow factor to the good folks of Louisiana. The work here was tight and continuous, as good as that seen in the R&R matches with the Andersons or Condrey/Eaton. The Freebirds are put over here as you'd expect with Bill Watts booking -- his credos: a good man beats a good little man, and a strong heel draws more than a punk-ass.



Jumbo Tsuruta/ Genichiro Tenryu vs Yoshiaki Yatsu/ Riki Choshu- 1/28/1986- All Japan- [DEAN RASMUSSEN]: Yatsu and Choshu were such fabulous lumpy heavyweights and Tenryu and Jumbo were so phenomenally great, imagine my glee when RoyalDutchofDuke posted this baby. I assume that there will be an assbeating delivered to someone at some point. Jumbo is sullen, feeling the weight of the belt around his waist. Riki has taped up ribs and gets the STICK and talks shit to Tenryu. Tenryu is introduced and walks over and quietly threatens to break his leg up Choshu's ass. This match is already 27 stars. I love that Riki is as expressive as Tenryu is stoic. Riki fights off Jumbo's kick to the ribs until Jumbo locks up and kicks them, going into "aw just fuck you, motherfucker" mode. Riki and Jumbo power around as we wait for Riki and Tenryu to eventually lock up. Yatsu tags in and can't quite snapmare Jumbo or bull him around- as we are obviously killing time until Tenryu and Choshu beat the hell out of each other. But I digress. Jumbo grows weary of Yatsu, smacks him upside the head and throws him to the corner and thus begins Jumbo and Riki beating the hell out of other to allow Tenryu to tag in. Tenryu starts by walking over and smacking Yatsu in the chest. Choshu and Yatsu respond with... of course... a DOOMSDAY DEVICE. Yatsu tags in and just starts beating the living dogpiss out of Tenryu. Riki tags in and enters the ring via TOPROPE SPIKE PILEDRIVER. Tenryu takes some punches but chops out to a Stepmover Toehold. Yatsu and Choshu were a fun tag team I'm realizing. Tenryu procures the Figure Four and Yatsu makes the save via TOPROPE ELBOW. Yatsu then hits a fuckin Murdock-level Elbow drops. Tenryu lariats for a comeback and tags a fucking enraged Jumbo who pummels Yatsu until Yatsu hits the floor.

Yatsu dropkicks after a reversal and tags Choshu and they just beat the living breathing fuck out of each other. Jumbo is kicking last and bringing the ax-handles so he is winning until Choshu fucking KILLS him with a fucking GNARLEY Dangerous Backdrop. They both make it to their feet and mutually lariat each other into oblivion. Jumbo is up first and stomps Riki, tags in Tenryu and the assbeating of Choshu kicks into full gear. Tenryu- being a complete cock because he is fuckin Tenryu- starts punting the taped ribs like the tape means the strings were turned out correctly. Jumbo tags in and it gets even uglier. Riki fights like a motherfucker, but Jumbo is a bigger and badder motherfucker so Riki continues to get the living fudge kicked out of himself. Tenryu comes in and suplexes him and kicks him in the ribs a few times. Yatsu makes the save- as he TRULY is the greatest Robert Gibson Ever and makes a save with a toprope axe-handle. It all breaks down as Yatsu works on Jumbo's knee in the ring while Tenryu fucking mauls Choshu like a grizzly bear- a grizzly bear that can also paste you in the ribs with a metal chair. Jumbo destroys Yatsu with a Lariat as they show them re-taping Choshu's ribs. This is fucking Horsemen-RnR level great Southern tag wrestling. Tenryu is fucking awesome switching the ass-beating over to Yatsu. Riki makes the tag and hits a dropkick- selling the ribs like a fucking KING afterwards. Riki hits the Scorpion Deathlock and we await Tenryu to make the save via speeding Dodge Ram. Instead Jumbo powers out and Riki makes the tag. So they beat the living fuck out of Yatsu. Yatsu fires back with Actual Bulldogs. Jumbo hits the floor and Choshu posts him. Tenryu makes it over and fucking savages Choshu with a chair. THIS IS WRESTLING VIOLENCE LIKE YOU READ ABOUT. THIS IS FUCKING AWWWWESOME. Yatsu and Jumbo take it to the floor and Choshu sucker punches Jumbo so Tenryu comes over and fucking mauls Choshu on the outside a THIRD time. Yatsu is suplexing Jumbo for two counts and Jumbo is busted open. Yatsu hits a Sharpshooter and Jumbo is a broken man. But he powers out! Yatsu with the backbreaker and another Sharpshooter- but this time Tenryu fucking PLASTERS Yatsu with a Lariat to save and Choshu goes nuts stomping Jumbo. This match is fucking psychotically great. Tenryu enzugiris Yatsu and now Choshu is trying to see how big of a dick he can be making saves- as he stomps Tenryu's skull to the mat. Yatsu with a rollup and Yatsu getting Hotshot (shotted?). Choshu with the save. Tenryu with the Stuff Powerbomb and Jumbo gets to Choshu before he can make the save and MOTHER OF FUCK IS THIS A GREAT FUCKING WRESTLING MATCH.

RON STARR V CACTUS JACK [AG]: Continental Wrestling, 1989, A dirty time in the dirty south. Ron Fuller is cutting heel promos in lilac Dirty Dancing t-shirts. Brickhouse Brown is part of the Stud Stable. Dennis 'Lethal Weapon' Condrey is your world heavyweight champion. And this new kid came into the area, a Mansun, from Global. Worked a couple of squashes. Does this elbow off the ring apron. Comes out to Beatles music. He's got a problem, see. This genki young babyface, a Ron Starr, seeks to exact revenge -- seems Cactus put out Starr's baby bastard son, ended his career in a squash elsewhere, somewhere. Starr wanted Jack! And he wanted to avenge his miserable job of fathering, clearly. So Jack and Ron have a Tuscaloosa Death Match. Or was it a Dothan Abbatoir Bout? An Anniston Sluggeroo? Well, the name isn't so important. What does matter is that Starr and Jack beat the holy hell out of each other. Like Buckley V Vidal. Or like two guys in Puerto Rico of today, maybe, working a loser gets to wear David Flair's nightshirt match. This was a sick little brawl, heavier in some ways than

Benoit/Sullivan, with more than a hint of New Jack/Balls thrown in [i.e., they made liberal use of the de facto empty arena -- it was as if D-Con wasn't a draw as champ]. Worth seeing, though the tape I have of this has some Terry Garvin crapola and probably won't be watched again on this end.

JUMBO TSURUTA VS. KERRY VON ERICH- NWA Heavyweight Championship match- 5/22/84- All Japan Pro Wrestling- [RYAN (mul)DOOMSTONE]: I cannot begin to match DEAN's psychological dissection of the VonErich clan from two issues prior, and I will not even try. Suffice it to say that, growing up as a nine, ten and eleven year-old boy in Rhode Island, World Class Championship Wrestling was the first wrestling I ever watched with any regularity - and in fact, with religious devotion - so the Von Erich's will always hold a special place in my wrestling heart. When news came that Kerry had defeated Ric Flair for the NWA belt ... well, to this day, it was more exciting to me and my friends than any World Series, any Super Bowl, anything. So I guess this was one of the matches he had before dropping the belt back to Flair in Japan. How many matches did Kerry wrestle as champ? I'm sure the information is out there on the internet, but I can't even begin to contemplate the Google search query I would need to construct to find the answer. At any rate, here we go, starting with the streamers o' plenty. Who's the guy in the red and black mask in Kerry's corner? Again, I fear Google and won't find out. They start with a handshake fraught with both respect and venom. I'm in love. The crowd is going apeshit already with a chant I fail to decipher. Kerry-san? Jumbo-san? I don't know. I don't know much, do I? Collar and elbow, clean break from the ropes. Trading wristlocks, Kerry breaks Jumbo's with a standing dropkick and stands up in a pseudo-Karate pose, which gets some ohhhhs-and-awwwws. Never let it be said that KVE didn't know how to work a room. Jumbo is the first to gain control with the headlock. The ref is right there checking for a choke - Japanese quality control in action. Jumbo with an elbow to the back of the head before KVE whips him to the ropes and hits an ... awkward shoulder block. KVE follows up with an ... awkward hip toss into an arm bar. I'm sensing communication problems. Jumbo stands his way out of the armbar, catching Kerry in a fireman's carry position, and deposits him on the top rope in the corner for a clean break. That was ... respectful. Jumbo with the forearm smashes and locks in for a butterfly suples. KVE resists, but Jumbo lands it. Jumbo fails to capitalize on the momentum and we're back to wrist locks. KVE with the dreaded discus punches that I love. Jumbo with the flying cross-body block off the whip to the ropes for two. Jumbo locks in a less-than-textbook abdominal stretch. KVE looks ready to hit his room at the Tokyo Hilton and get high and watch crazy Japanese TV. They drop the stretch to the mat, Kerry gains control and threatens the claw. Jumbo sells it like KVE has anthrax in his fingernails. NOT THE CLAW!! NOT THE CLAW!!! KVE locks on the abdominal claw and it's ...you know. Jumbo escapes for a weird back-breaker where he rests KVE on his knee for a few seconds, then locks in a half-nelson, then a front facelock. Kerry lifts Jumbo and returns the favor of setting him on the top rope for a clean break ... except the clean break is less than clean, with Kerry getting in a quick push to Jumbo's chest. Jumbo is enraged at the lack of respect, as is the crowd. A break in the ropes and Jumbo returns the favor, sending Von Erich to the mat with a shove and we're all fully invested in this struggle for supremacy now. Kerry attempts a single-leg take down - a single-leg takedown! - but Jumbo blocks and ducks around. Jumbo hits a forearm smash, sends Von Erich into the ropes and meets him with a high jumping knee. KVE teases an over the top-rope bump,

but then remembers he doesn't do that stuff. Jumbo with another knee and THIS time Kerry commits and goes over the top. Von Erich with the sunset flip from the outside for two. They lock up in a test of strength, Jumbo ducks under and hits a kick to the back of the head, drops KVE with a suplex and ... GETS THE THREE?!?! What the fuck? Is this two out of three or did I misread my wrestling history book?!? No one is going anywhere so I guess it is two out of three. Bell rings, and Jumbo's a house of fire, smashing Von Erich across the head and slamming him into the turnbuckle. Von Erich makes you - the Japanese fan of 21 years prior - realize that he's in no shape to defend the belt. More Jumbo clubbing and punching and Von Erich is busted wide open before crumbling in a modified Flair flop. The crowd is fully behind Jumbo now. A discus punch reverses Von Erich's fortunes. KVE with a knee-drop that's not quite Harley Race level. Into the ropes goes Jumbo and KVE locks on the sleeper hold. He's got it locked in, his blood is flowing and his head is shaking to and fro. You're going down, Jumbo! Go Kerry!!! Suddenly, I'm ten again. Jumbo manages to break the hold by sending Kerry crashing into the corner. Von Erich hits a textbook dropkick and staggers around, a blood-drenched Texas poontang & pills machine. Discus punch is blocked and Jumbo has Von Erich in the corner, punch after punch. The ref insists on a clean break, the crowd is going nutty and Kerry Von Erich in a crumbled, bloody mess in the corner. I'm totally into this. Von Erich tries for a vertical suplex, Jumbo reverses for two. The both come off the ropes for ... some sort of collision. Jumbo hits a piledriver and I began to wonder why I never knew that Jumbo Tsuruta defeated Kerry Von Erich for the NWA belt. Two count. Punching back and both, discus and non-discus. Von Erich sends Jumbo into the ropes and applies to VON ERICH IRON CLAW to Jumbo's noodle and the crowd goes "Kiss Alive II" apeshit. God bless whoever was responsible for first getting the claw - THE CLAW!!! - over as an international threat. Jumbo will get out of this like I get out of paying taxes, which is to say not at all. What's this?!?! Jumbo to his feet! The crowd ohhhhs and awwwwws along with me. Von Erich uses brute strength to send him back down to the mat and gets the three count. The bell rings ... but Kerry refuse to relent! Heel champion Kerry Von Erich, I salute thee. Someone sends a streamer into the ring at this crucial moment and finally Von Erich releases. Jumbo is a battered, drooling mess and someone in his corner decides to massage his temples, like he had a tough day at the office. The bell rings for our third and final fall, and Jumbo is still trying to shake the cobwebs off while Von Erich in strutting and taunting. It's a KVE I never knew. Kerry with some theatrical punches before going for the claw once again, but Jumbo blocks. Jumbo gets out of the ring LIKE A COWARD! Back inside, Von Erich gets caught with a knee and the corner, and the way he sells it, it's clear the guy was at least paying attention SOME of the time when he saw and wrestled Flair. Jumbo grabs the claw hand and smashes it into the turnbuckle. And again. An armdrag and repeated stompings of the claw hand ensue. Isn't this the story for why Von Erich eventually dropped the belt back to Flair - because his claw hand was mangled by Jumbo, thus eliminating his most fearsome weapon on the ring? I hope so. Von Erich battles back with a few kicks and a punch to the head ... with the injured hand. Luckily, he sells it as such and Jumbo is back on the attack, creatively destroying the claw hand against the steel ringpost. Nice suplex sends Von Erich back into the ring for a 2.9 count. Jumbo is all over the hand and arm and Von Erich is clearly going down. The crowd is back to their chant from the beginning and I think we can now dismiss the idea that they are chanting "Kerry-san." Von Erich regains control with a high back suplex and an elbow drop for two. Von Erich with his own piledriver and turnabout is fairplay. Von Erich up to the tope for a

FUCKING MOONSAULT?!?!?!? No, just a weird elbow drop, which misses the mark. Jumbo returns with another running knee and gets Von Erich in the Boston Crab. Von Erich does a push-up to power out and they trade sliding, ducking, reversing two-counts. Von Erich is not punching with the claw-hand and ... forgetting that it should really hurt. He lifts Jumbo and they both go awkwardly tumbling outside the ring. Neither will let the other get back in the ring and Von Erich locks the claw in on the outside. Jumbo breaks it but not quickly enough to beat the count, and Von Erich remains YOUR NWA heavyweight champion. That was a blast.



Jumbo Tsuruta vs Yoshiaki Yatsu- All Japan Pro Wrestling- 1989- [DEAN RASMUSSEN]:
RoyalDutchofDukes posted this and we thank him. In 1989, Jumbo was pretty much the Japanese wrestling version of Robert Mitchum in HOME FROM THE HILL- an aging motherfucker who was still at the top of his game and was a bastard you had to go through if you wanted what he has. Yatsu was fixing to become Barbarian Miracle Match Worker For 8 Months nine months in. Yatsu wrestles him on the mat, as Jumbo will beat the hell out of you if you just stand there. After a while, Jumbo starts working on Yatsu's arm and you notice that Jumbo and Flair did exact matwork whenever called upon. Jumbo with the Hammerlock and then Jumbo says, Ah, to hell with this" and starts stomping on Yatsu. It's why you love the Jumbo. He knows how to not bore you. Yatsu starts stomping back and they start pushing each other and we have a wrestling match on

our hands. Jumbo backs Yatsu into the ropes and smacks the taste out of his mouth- as if Yatsu were his little bitch- as if Jumbo matches were the fucking greatest things to be produced in Japan in the 80s. They beat the hell out of each other for a few minutes and Jumbo goes back to the arm. It's like the beating of someone's ass is the highspots to break up the matwork- **INGENIOUS**. Jumbo tires of Flair-like matwork and opts to stomp to allow Yatsu to dropkick and suplex Toprope Guillotine to offense. Yatsu uses his big moves to set up a momentary Octopus Hold that Jumbo scoffs at. Jumbo breaks necks like a Russian and can't get Yatsu up for the Piledriver. Jumbo goes back to slapping Yatsu like a little bitch and Yatsu responds with his own and also an Actual Bulldog. Jumbo opts for the Lariat to close out the Wild West theme to the sequence and and they take it to the floor and stomp the dogshit out of each other. Jumbo blades more than

Dusty. Yatsu punches him dead on the cut. Yatsu stomps dead on the cut. Jumbo Big Boots and Backdrops his way to offense and a two count. Jumbo with the fucking beautiful High Knee. Yatsu answers with a dropkick and German with a Bridge for two and starts stomping Jumbo's leg. And then does a move that Yuji Nagata would later modify into one of his Nagata Locks. Jumbo hits the ropes but Yatsu says, "fuck a break." The ref has to do the untangling of legs and the effect of Flair on Japan is felt again. Yatsu savages the leg and Jumbo escapes to the floor where he posts Yatsu and Yatsu carves his own head up. Jumbo slams his head into the post again. Jumbo punches him dead on the cut. Jumbo **HIGH KNEES DEAD ON THE CUT**. Yatsu pushes the ref out of the way as they are pummeling each other and the ref calls for the bell and the 80s end as they begin in All Japan- with a truly shitty ending truly fucking great match.

Jumbo Tsuruta vs Genichiro Tenryu- 10/28/1988- All Japan Pro Wrestling-[DEAN RASMUSSEN]: (Thank you, BNewt.) I don't think we ever reviewed this, if we did, replace it in your mind with **THIS!** Tenryu is the surliest motherfucker on earth as they face off. The key to these two is that they are basically big Texas heavyweights but taken to a higher level because Japanese wrestling filters their Texasness through Japanese surliness- thus creating a perfect Texas wrestler. Tenryu is such an asshole before the lock up. Jumbo fucks around with the clean break and Tenryu smacks Jumbo in the chest after the next break but nothing molten yet so they do some headlocks and some knucklelocks. finally, Jumbo bulls Tenryu in the corner and smacks him in the chest as they break. Nothing hellish yet so Tenryu does the Ric Flair shinbreaker and goes back to a headlock until Jumbo backdrops to freedom! Jumbo says "Fuck it, show time." and they just beating the fuck out of each other. Jumbo with the chops, Tenryu with the throw into the guardrail and the throw to the floor. Jumbo goes fucking apeshit after a second ride to the rail- beating Tenryu like a little bitch. He then suplexes Tenryu in the ring for two and Tenryu seethes with hatred as he sells the damage and then takes more damage as Jumbo hits a sweet Piledriver. Jumbo calms it back down with a Front Chancery and a **BEAUTIFUL** fuckin **CRAVATE~!**- wrenching it in with 3/4 Finlay technique. Jumbo with the High Knee and Tenryu counters with an Enzuiguri- as I see they did the annoying "Hit My Big Finisher Right After Yours Right Before I sell It" thing way back in the day too. Tenryu with a Fujiwara Armbar to **TRANSITION!** and then starts beating on Jumbo. Tenryu works the knee after kicking it straight on like a complete cock. Tenryu stands up and starts kicking Jumbo in the face as I and I alone seem to be the reason they are having this match. Tenryu with a Corner

Lariat for two. Tenryu with a German With A Bridge for two. Jumbo powers out of the Powerbomb attempt and they go all Memphis by seeing who will be the last standing after punching each other in the face. Jumbo wins- but we all win really. They take it to the floor and the assbeating continues. Jumbo really isn't afraid to punch Tenryu right in the face. Tenryu does the MOST DICKISH RUNNING KNEEDROP IN THE HISTORY OF PROFESSIONAL WRESTLING and you and I weep at the intrinsic beauty of the Art of Professional Wrestling. Tenryu with a headscissors that Jumbo reverses into a Boston Crab until Tenryu hits the ropes- so Jumbo starts kicking him in the back and calling him a pussy. Jumbo goes for the Crab again but Tenryu fights out. Jumbo stomps his leg and goes for a Spinning Toehold but Tenryu blocks it so Jumbo falls into a Kneebar/Figure Four/Nagata Lock thingy and Tenryu groans in pain. Tenryu hits the ropes and Jumbo stands him up and chops him and High Knees him and sliding dropkicks him out of the ring to throw Tenryu facefirst into a table. Tenryu SWEETLY lariats off the apron into the ring to stop a charging Jumbo- making Jumbo fall through the ropes to the floor. Tenryu- being fuckin TENRYU- dives through the ropes and fucking kills Jumbo on the floor. Tenryu crushes him with a chair. Jumbo rolls through a toprope shoulderblock and gets a two but Tenryu enzuguiris and FUCKING LARIATs to cut him off. Jumbo fights back with a Running High Knee to the Stomach and then stomps him into the ground. They mutually lariat each other and do some odd roll-ups. Jumbo kills Tenryu with an elbow and Backdrop and kicks him in the head a few times. They go Super-Memphis killing each other with punches to set up Tenryu's transition to offense with a half crab. Tenryu chops the living dogshit out of Jumbo and Jumbo hits hellishly furious clubbing forearms and they throw in a roll-up. Jumbo stands on Tenryu's head and pulls down with the ropes and we are hitting the homestretch. They do a roll-up sequence and Tenryu fights and loses to a Backdrop attempt. Tenryu does the fat ass fat guy standing both feet dropkick to the face while you are one knee and whips out the Figure Four. Tenryu is savage pushing up on the leg to hyperextend the knee. Jumbo hits the ropes and Tenryu is just a fuckin DICK stomping Jumbo right in the face and burying his leg into his back. Jumbo hits an Enzuguri and goes up top and crushes Tenryu with a Toprope High Knee to the face. For two. Jumbo returns the Face Stomp and they scramble for a hold with Tenryu procuring the kneebar. Tenryu is awesome taunting Jumbo while hyper-extending his knee. Jumbo escapes and punches him in the back of the head. Tenryu cuts him off with a Enzuguri and Blind toprope Elbow. Jumbo hits a crazy out-of-control powerbomb and you feel the love as he gets a two count with a Thesz Press. Jumbo with Western Lariat and Tenryu isn't going away. Jumbo with a high Knee and Lariat into the corner and straight rights to the face and it rules. Tenryu with a lowblow and kicks to the face and the stomping and punching and the ref calls for the bell. And God you gotta hate 80s All Japan booking.

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